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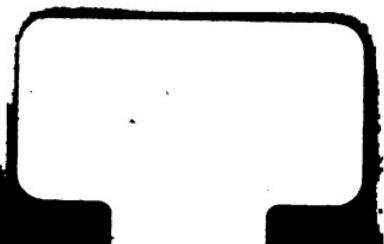
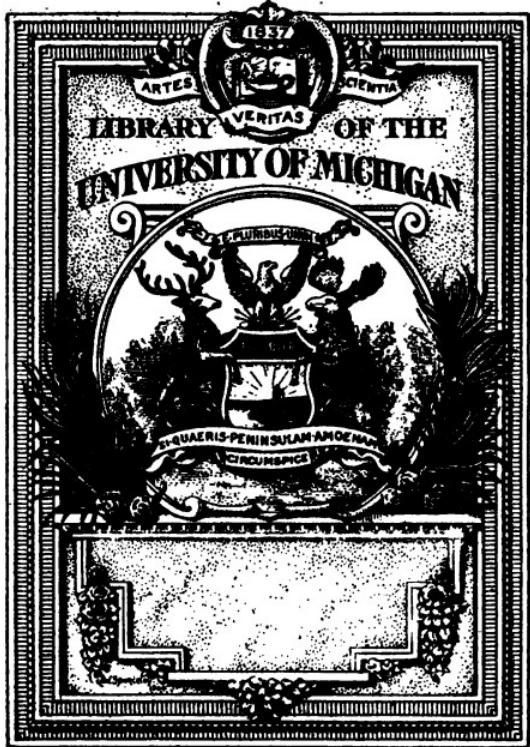
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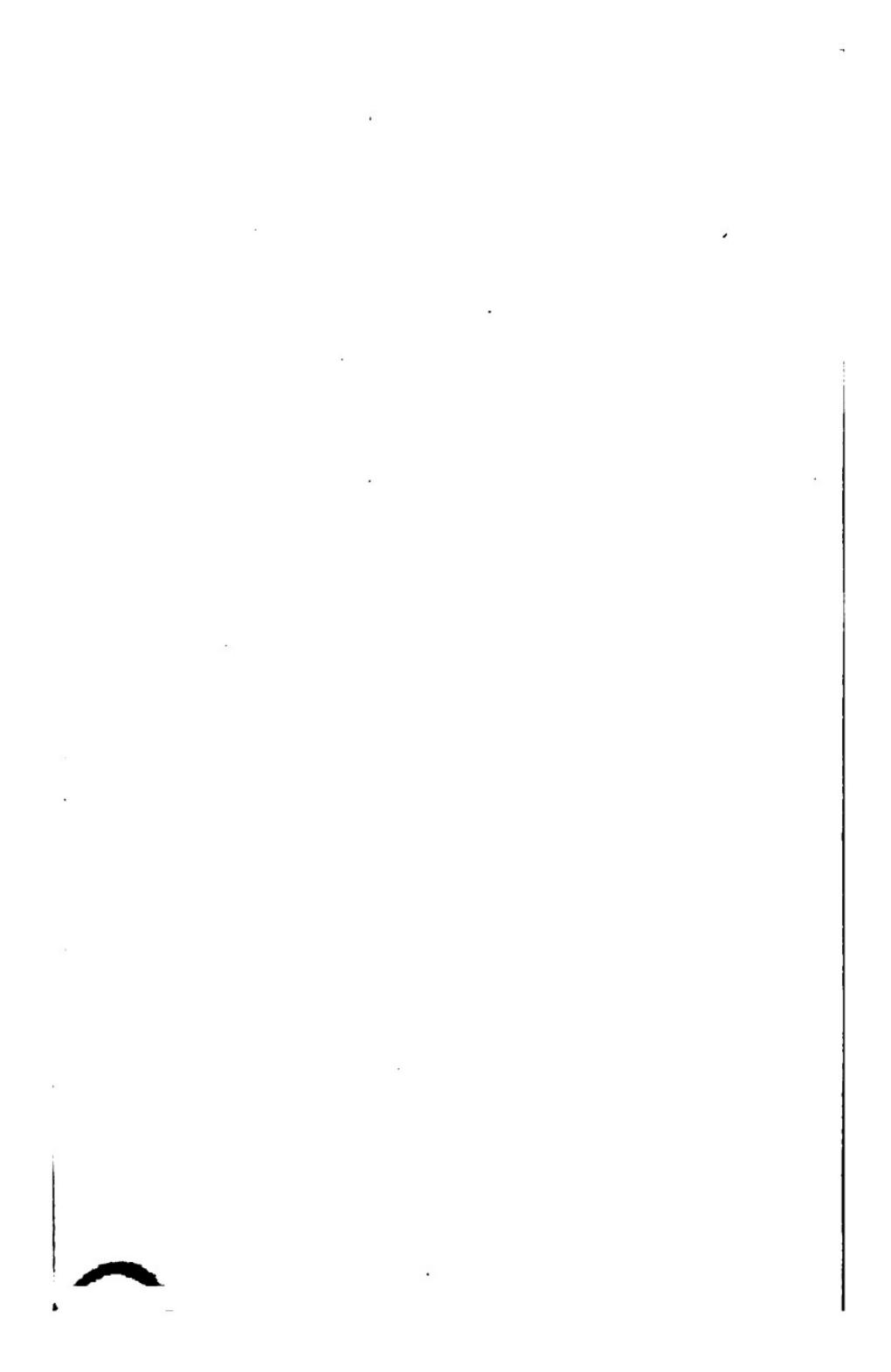
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*BLACKIE'S JUNIOR SCHOOL SHAKESPEARE*

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THE TRAGEDY  
OF  
60437  
M A C B E T H

EDITED BY

HENRY C. NOTCUTT, B.A. (LOND.)  
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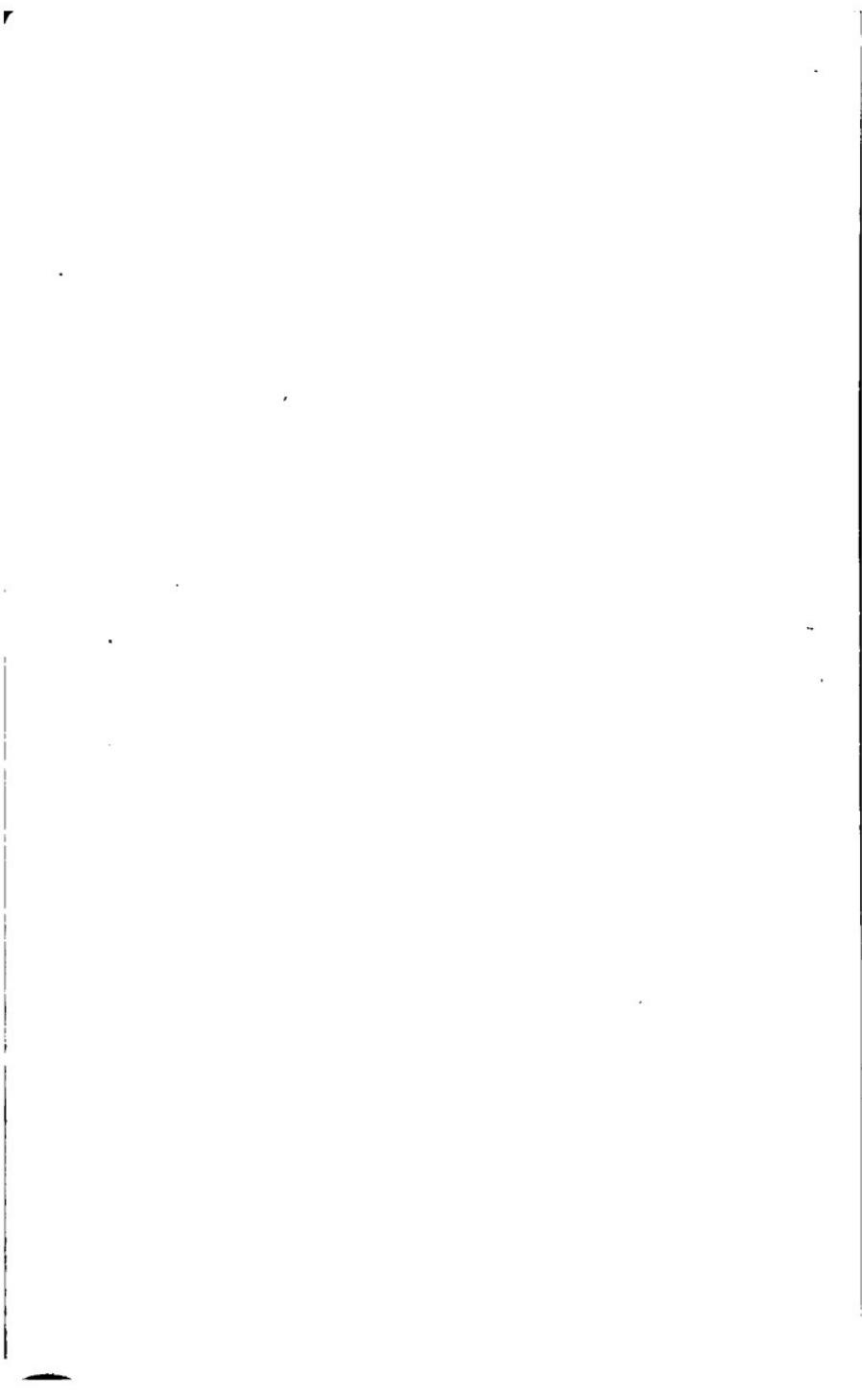
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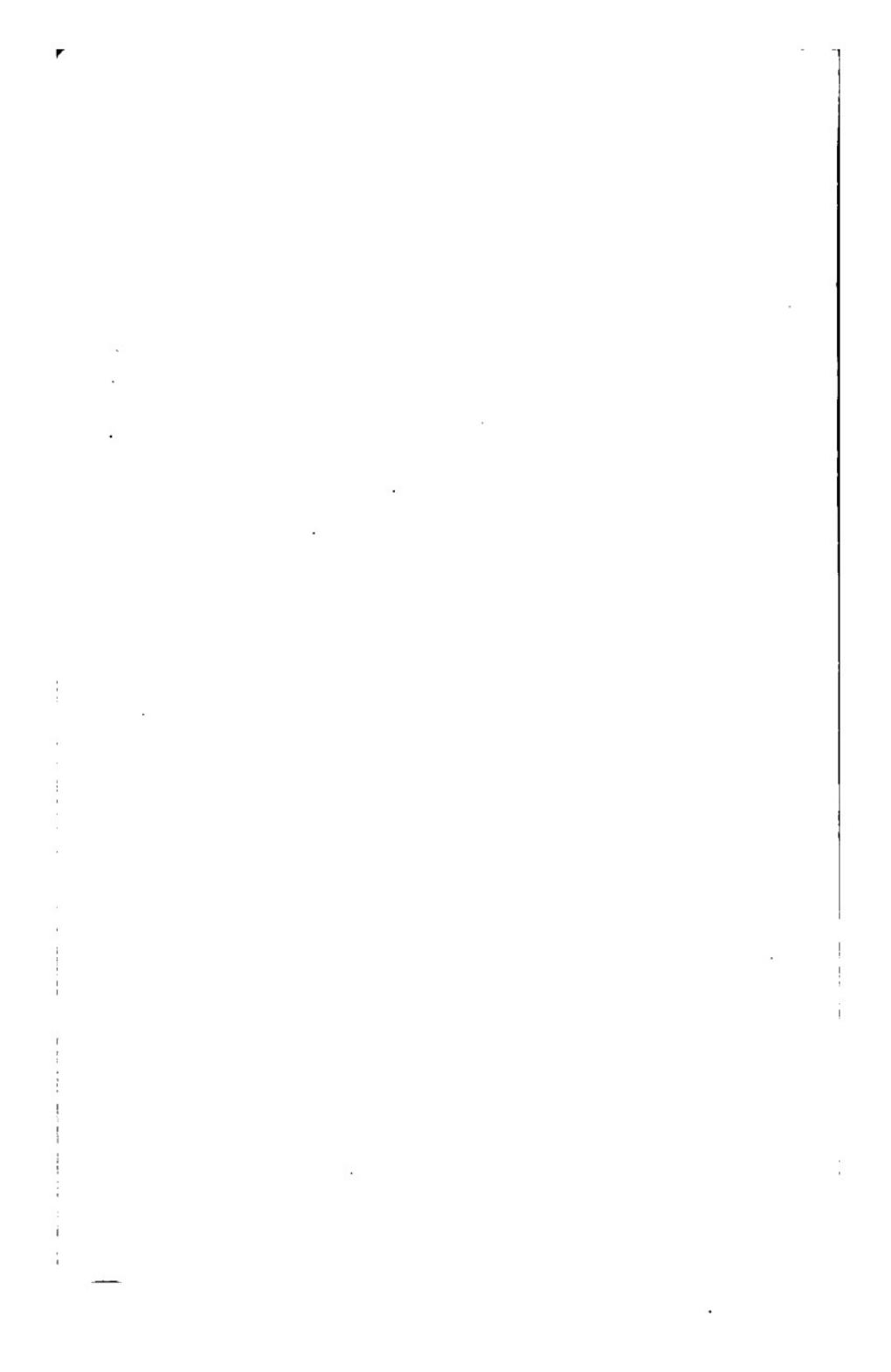
The series will also be found suitable as annotated reading books in the upper classes of those elementary schools in which Shakespeare is read.



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## INTRODUCTION.

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### 1. THE DATE OF THE PLAY.

IN recent years much care has been given to finding out the order in which the plays of Shakespeare were written. This is a more important matter than it appears to be at first sight, for it is only through a correct knowledge of the order of the plays that we are able to recognize and study the wonderful growth of his powers, from the days when he showed his 'prentice hand in such plays as the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, till the time when his greatness had fully ripened, and he produced *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, and the *Tempest*.

Now there is a good deal of difficulty in finding out the exact date of many of the plays, because they were written to be acted, not to be printed, and no regular record of the appearance of new plays was kept, or if kept it has not come down to us. Only about half of Shakespeare's plays were printed during his lifetime, and of those many were brought out without his permission. The means for deciding when he wrote any particular play are therefore often very imperfect. It is believed that *Macbeth* was written about the year 1606, and the chief reasons for fixing on this date are briefly as follows:—

(1) It must have been after the accession of James I. (1603), for the union of the English and Scotch crowns under that king is referred to in Macbeth's words:

Some I see  
That two-fold balls and treble sceptres carry.  
(iv. 1. 117.)

The same king is also referred to in iv. 3. 129-148.

(2) It cannot be later than 1610, because on the 20th of April in that year Dr. Simon Forman saw it acted at the Globe Theatre, and wrote an account of it in his diary which is still to be seen in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. But this was not necessarily the first performance of the play.

There is no doubt, then, that *Macbeth* was written between 1603 and 1610. To fix its date more exactly we have to rely on some less definite indications.

(3) The words, "Here's a farmer that hanged himself on the expectation of plenty" (ii. 3. 5) suggest the date 1606, for in that year the price of wheat is known to have been unusually low.

(4) The words, "Here's an equivocator that could swear in both scales against either scale; who committed treason enough for God's sake, yet could not equivocate to heaven" (ii. 3. 9) were probably intended to refer to the trial of Henry Garnet, a Jesuit, and one of the conspirators in the Gunpowder Plot. At his trial, which took place in 1606, he stated that he believed equivocation to be lawful.

The fact that these two passages come close together strengthens the probability that they are meant to refer to the events named, and as allusions of this kind are generally introduced when the matters referred to are fresh in the recollection of everyone, we are led to fix on the year 1606 as the most probable date for *Macbeth*.

## 2. THE STORY OF THE PLAY.

When the sons of Canute were ruling in England, Duncan, the grandson of Malcolm, was King of Scotland. One of his thanes, Macdonwald, had rebelled against him, and was receiving help from the King of Norway. The rebellion was crushed by Macbeth and Banquo, the former of whom was Duncan's cousin. While returning from the war to report their success to Duncan, they meet three witches on a heath, who salute Macbeth by his own title of Thane of Glamis, and also as Thane of Cawdor, and tell him that one day he will be king. To Banquo they promise that his descendants shall be kings though he will not himself wear the crown. No sooner have the witches vanished than the Thane of Ross meets Macbeth, and in Duncan's name gives him the title of Thane of Cawdor. This rapid fulfilment of the words of the witches startles Macbeth, and he at once thinks of making the rest come true by murdering Duncan and seizing the throne. He sends to his wife an account of what has happened, and she too makes up her mind that he shall have the whole of what the witches have promised him. Duncan comes to spend the night at Macbeth's castle, and then Macbeth hesitates to carry out his dark purpose. At length, stung by his wife's taunts, he nerves himself to the deed, and murders his guest. Malcolm and Donalbain, the sons of Duncan, flee from the place, and the report is spread that they had incited the king's guards to commit the murder.

Macbeth is now crowned king, but is uneasy because of the pro-

mise made by the witches to Banquo. To rid himself of this trouble he arranges for Banquo and Fleance, his son, to be murdered. The father falls, but the son escapes. At a great banquet held the same night, Macbeth thinks that he sees the ghost of Banquo, and horrifies the guests by his cries. The next day he visits the witches, and in their cavern is warned against Macduff, a thane who would not give his support to the usurper, but is comforted by the assurances that no one born of woman shall harm him, and that he shall never be vanquished till Birnam Wood shall come to Dunsinane Hill. He seizes the castle of Macduff, and puts to death his wife and children. Macduff himself has fled to England, and with Malcolm, Duncan's eldest son, and Siward, Earl of Northumbria, is planning the overthrow of Macbeth.

The strain of these terrible events has shattered the strong mind of Lady Macbeth; she walks in her sleep, talking of the guilty secrets hidden in her heart, and before the English army has surrounded their castle she dies. Macbeth prepares to meet them, but is cowed when a report is brought to him that Birnam Wood is coming to Dunsinane Hill. The English soldiers have cut down branches of the trees, and are carrying them to conceal their numbers. The words of the witches are now coming true in an unexpected way, and Macduff, who was not born of woman, ends the tragedy by slaying Macbeth in battle. Scotland is freed from the tyrant, and Malcolm is crowned king.

### 3. THE SOURCE OF THE PLOT.

Shakespeare took the story of Macbeth from the *Chronicle of England, Scotland, and Ireland*, by Raphael Holinshed and others. This was first published in 1577, but the edition which Shakespeare used was the second, published in 1587. The play follows closely Holinshed's story of the reigns of Duncan and Macbeth; but in one important matter Shakespeare has made an alteration to suit his own purpose. Holinshed does relate that Macbeth slew Duncan, but the details are altogether different from those in the play. There is another murder story in Holinshed—the murder of King Duff, Duncan's great-grandfather, by Donwald and his wife—and it is from this that Shakespeare drew the details of his murder scene.

### 4. THE HISTORICAL ACCURACY OF THE PLAY.

The story of Macbeth is based upon fact, but a great deal of Holinshed's narrative must be regarded as legend rather than his-

tory, and of course the play keeps less closely to the facts than does the book on which it is based. It is difficult now to say what the exact course of events was, but the following summary will give some idea of the extent to which the story is true.

*A. Points in which the play is historically accurate.*

1. There was a King of Scotland named Duncan who ruled a little before the time of Edward the Confessor (1034-1040).
2. He had a cousin named Macbeth who was in command of the army.
3. Duncan was murdered either by Macbeth in person or by his orders.
4. After reigning for some time Macbeth was defeated by an English army under Siward, Earl of Northumbria, and in this battle Siward's son was slain.
5. Malcolm, the eldest son of Duncan, succeeded Macbeth.

*B. Chief points in which the play is historically untrue.*

1. There is reason to believe that the rebellion of Macdonwald, mentioned early in the play, never took place, though it is found in Holinshed.
2. Macbeth did not fight against the Norwegians, but was helped by them in his attempt to gain the crown.
3. Duncan was not murdered in Macbeth's castle but at Bothgowan, or the Smith's house, near Elgin.
4. Macbeth's reign was not a time of misery but of prosperity in Scotland; he was noted for his liberality to the Church.
5. Macbeth lived for three years after his defeat by Siward (1054); he was killed in battle with Malcolm in 1057.
6. The minor characters are of course invented, and it is even uncertain whether Macduff and Banquo had any real existence.

*5. CRITICAL REMARKS.*

If we had no external evidence to show when *Macbeth* was written, a careful reading of the play would soon make it evident that it belonged to a time when Shakespeare's powers had reached their full ripeness. It is one of the most powerful and harmonious of his works, and leaves the impression of having been composed very rapidly, struck out at a white heat.

(1) In real life every man's character is a mixture of good and

bad qualities; and, as Shakespeare has drawn for us the most lifelike pictures of men and women, they too show the same mixture. Macbeth has his good points. He is a brave and capable soldier, as we find at the beginning and even at the end of the play; he is attached to his wife; he is capable of true and noble feelings. But the main cause of his going to the bad is his consuming selfishness. Through the whole story no single thought of the welfare of Scotland guides his actions; only once does it seem to occur to him that to make his wife queen is at least as worthy an object as to make himself king; and so marked is this selfishness that it is even at the root of the causes which make him hesitate to murder Duncan; for he fears that the golden opinions which he has won by crushing the late rebellion will be lost if any suspicions are aroused that he has had a hand in the murder. Towards the end of the play this becomes still more evident. For instance, when Lady Macbeth is seriously ill he asks the doctor attending her how the patient is, but he shows at once that he is thinking more of the troubles weighing upon his own mind than of his wife; and so completely is he wrapped up in himself that he actually goes on to say: "Throw physic to the dogs; I'll none of it", quite forgetting that the doctor is there to prescribe for Lady Macbeth, not for him. When the news of her death is brought to him, it only moves him to a few general remarks on the shortness and vanity of life. This is his main characteristic; but two or three other points should be noticed. Firstly, the readiness with which he yields to the temptation suggested by the salutation of the witches. There was no direct prompting to evil in their words. Banquo is not stirred to plots and treason by their promises to him. Macbeth, being of royal blood, might well have supposed that in the course of nature the crown would come to him without his seeking. But his mind is so prepared for evil that the idea of securing by murder the promised title flashes before him in a moment, and so lays hold of him as to shake his very nature. Again, his cowardice and hesitation when there is no call for immediate action stand in strong contrast to his readiness and bravery in battle. This comes out clearly while he and his wife are plotting the murder of Duncan, and again towards the end of the play, when the time for meeting the English forces is drawing near but has not yet come. Lastly, it must not be overlooked that the ruin which Macbeth brings upon himself is quite as much inward and spiritual as it is outward and visible. Before his first crime he is able to banish the illusion of the dagger by an effort of will; and even after murdering Duncan

he can still meet his fellows with self-control and every appearance of innocence. But when he has gone on to remove Banquo from his path, and his excited imagination makes him see the form of his murdered comrade, he cannot banish that, and he utters words in the presence of the assembled guests which more than hint at his guilty secrets. From this point his very crimes become purposeless; to put Lady Macduff to death can do nothing to make his seat on the throne more safe; and in the last act the ruin of his mental and moral power is complete.

(2) Lady Macbeth is a far finer character than her husband. She has an iron will as unbending as his is changeful, and when she has once made up her mind to a line of action, no thought of heaven or hell can turn her from her purpose. It is this very strength of will that leads her to the worst action of her life; for when her husband is inclined to draw back from the plan they had formed she can hardly understand such hesitation, and urges him on in the course which they had determined upon till he nerves himself for the dreadful deed. So too, when she feels the deep misery of their position, and how little they have gained by the crime, she crushes down every sign of this feeling in her husband's presence, and is as ready to support him as ever; while at the banquet she strains every nerve to make him throw off his morbid fancies and realize the danger of his position. But with all this strength of will she cannot wholly put off her woman's nature; she cannot use the knife upon Duncan; she faints when Macbeth describes his dead body; her wretchedness finds expression when she is alone; she is exhausted and broken down after the banquet, till at last the strain is too great for her frail body. The sleep-walking is a sign of the collapse of her marvellous self-control, and death soon follows. Through the whole sad story it must be remembered that her cruelty and crime are not for her own sake but for Macbeth's. His advancement and his safety were her single aim. His selfishness stands in marked contrast to her entire devotion to him, and we cannot but feel that if he had been a worthier man she might have been one of the noblest women in Scottish history.

(3) Banquo does not fill a large space in the play, but his character is drawn with masterly precision. He is a loyal-hearted, upright soldier, whose advice in council was "both grave and prosperous", and whose bravery in battle was no less than Macbeth's. We see how free his mind was from any taint of evil in the meeting with the witches on the heath. Their promises suggest no evil

thoughts to him ; he is startled and curious, but in a manly, straightforward way, not with the excited and unhealthy curiosity which Macbeth shows.

(4) The witches may be regarded as representing the evil suggestions which may occur to any man, and which have power over him just as he is willing or unwilling to listen to them. So Macbeth gives himself up to their direction, while Banquo never sees them after the first meeting on the heath.

(5) The text of *Macbeth* is in a somewhat corrupt condition. It was not printed till seven years after Shakespeare's death, and there is reason for believing that the copy used by the printers was one that had suffered some alterations. These cannot be discussed in detail here, but briefly it may be said that some passages have probably been cut out of the play as it first stood, and others inserted. The lines spoken by Hecate and a few others of similar style were probably inserted by Middleton, a dramatist about six years younger than Shakespeare, and whose play *The Witch* has some curious resemblances to *Macbeth*.

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DUNCAN, King of Scotland.

MALCOLM,  
DONALBAIN,  
} his sons.

MACBETH,  
BANQUO,  
} generals of the king's army.

MACDUFF,  
LENNOX,  
ROSS,  
MENTEITH,  
ANGUS,  
CAITHNESS,  
} noblemen of Scotland.

FLEANCE, son to Banquo.

SIWARD, Earl of Northumberland, general of the English forces.

Young SIWARD, his son.

SEYTON, an officer attending on Macbeth.

Boy, son to Macduff.

An English Doctor.

A Scotch Doctor.

A Soldier.

A Porter.

An Old Man.

LADY MACBETH.

LADY MACDUFF.

Gentlewoman attending on Lady Macbeth.

[HECATE.]

Three Witches.

Apparitions.

Lords, Gentlemen, Officers, Soldiers, Murderers, Attendants, and Messengers.

SCENE: *Scotland: England.*

# MACBETH.

---

## ACT I.

SCENE I. *A desert place.*

*Thunder and lightning.* Enter three Witches.

*First Witch.* When shall we three meet again  
In thunder, lightning, or in rain?

*Sec. Witch.* When the hurly-burly's done,  
When the battle's lost and won.

*Third Witch.* That will be ere the set of sun.

5

*First Witch.* Where the place?

*Sec. Witch.* Upon the heath.

*Third Witch.* There to meet with Macbeth.

*First Witch.* I come, Graymalkin!

*Sec. Witch.* Paddock calls.

*Third Witch.* Anon.

10

*All.* Fair is foul, and foul is fair:  
Hover through the fog and filthy air.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A camp near Forres.*

*Alarum within.* Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN,  
LENNOX, with Attendants, meeting a bleeding Captain.

*Dun.* What bloody man is that? He can report,  
As seemeth by his plight, of the revolt  
The newest state.

*Mal.* This is the sergeant  
Who like a good and hardy soldier fought  
'Gainst my captivity. Hail, brave friend!  
Say to the king the knowledge of the broil  
As thou didst leave it.

5

*Cap.* Doubtful it stood;  
As two spent swimmers, that do cling together  
And choke their art. The merciless Macdonwald—  
Worthy to be a rebel, for to that  
The multiplying villanies of nature  
Do swarm upon him—from the western isles

10

Of kerns and gallowglasses is supplied;  
 And fortune, on his damned quarrel smiling,  
 Show'd like a rebel's wench: but all's too weak:  
 For brave Macbeth—well he deserves that name—  
 Disdaining fortune, with his brandish'd steel,  
 Which smoked with bloody execution,  
 Like valour's minion carved out his passage  
 Till he faced the slave; 15  
 Which ne'er shook hands, nor bade farewell to him,  
 Till he unseamed him from the nave to the chaps,  
 And fix'd his head upon our battlements.  
20

*Dun.* O valiant cousin! worthy gentleman!

*Cap.* As whence the sun 'gins his reflection  
 Shipwrecking storms and direful thunders break,  
 So from that spring whence comfort seem'd to come  
 Discomfort swells. Mark, king of Scotland, mark:  
 No sooner justice had with valour arm'd  
 Compell'd these skipping kerns to trust their heels,  
 But the Norwegian lord surveying vantage,  
 With furbish'd arms and new supplies of men  
 Began a fresh assault. 30

*Dun.* Dismay'd not this  
 Our captains, Macbeth and Banquo?

*Cap.* Yes;  
 As sparrows eagles, or the hare the lion.  
 If I say sooth, I must report they were  
 As cannons overcharged with double cracks, so they  
 Doubly redoubled strokes upon the foe:  
 Except they meant to bathe in reeking wounds,  
 Or memorize another Golgotha,  
 I cannot tell—  
 But I am faint, my gashes cry for help. 35

*Dun.* So well thy words become thee as thy wounds;  
 They smack of honour both. Go get him surgeons.

[*Exit Captain, attended.*]

Who comes here?

*Enter ROSS and ANGUS.*

*Mal.* The worthy thane of Ross.

*Len.* What a haste looks through his eyes! So should he  
 look

That seems to speak things strange.

*Ross.* God save the king!

*Dun.* Whence cam'st thou, worthy thane?

*Ross.* From Fife, great king

Where the Norwegian banners flout the sky  
 And fan our people cold. Norway himself,  
 With terrible numbers,  
 Assisted by that most disloyal traitor  
 The thane of Cawdor, began a dismal conflict ;  
 Till that Bellona's bridegroom, lapp'd in proof,  
 Confronted him with self-comparisons,  
 Point against point rebellious, arm 'gainst arm,  
 Curbing his lavish spirit : and, to conclude,  
 The victory fell on us.

*Dun.* Great happiness !

*Ross.* That now

Sweno, the Norways' king, craves composition ;  
 Nor would we deign him burial of his men  
 Till he disbursed at Saint Colme's inch  
 Ten thousand dollars to our general use.

*Dun.* No more that thane of Cawdor shall deceive  
 Our bosom interest : go pronounce his present death,  
 And with his former title greet Macbeth.

*Ross.* I'll see it done.

*Dun.* What he hath lost noble Macbeth hath won.

[*Exeunt.*

### SCENE III. *A heath near Forres.*

*Thunder.* Enter the three Witches.

*First Witch.* Where hast thou been, sister ?

*Sec. Witch.* Killing swine.

*Third Witch.* Sister, where thou ?

*First Witch.* A sailor's wife had chestnuts in her lap,  
 And munch'd, and munch'd, and munch'd :—‘Give me’,  
 quoth I :  
 ‘Aroint thee, witch !’ the rump-fed ronyon cries.  
 Her husband's to Aleppo gone, master o' the Tiger :  
 But in a sieve I'll thither sail,  
 And, like a rat without a tail,  
 I'll do, I'll do, and I'll do.

*Sec. Witch.* I'll give thee a wind.

*First Witch.* Thou 'rt kind.

*Third Witch.* And I another.

*First Witch.* I myself have all the other,  
 And the very ports they blow,  
 All the quarters that they know  
 I' the shipman's card.  
 I will drain him dry as hay :

5

10

15

Sleep shall neither night nor day  
 Hang upon his pent-house lid;  
 He shall live a man forbid:  
 Weary se'nights nine times nine  
 Shall he dwindle, peak and pine:  
 Though his bark cannot be lost,  
 Yet it shall be tempest-tost.  
 Look what I have.

*Sec. Witch.* Show me, show me.

*First Witch.* Here I have a pilot's thumb,  
 Wreck'd as homeward he did come.

[*Drum within.*]

*Third Witch.* A drum, a drum!  
 Macbeth doth come.

*All.* The weird sisters, hand in hand,  
 Posters of the sea and land,  
 Thus do go about, about:  
 Thrice to thine and thrice to mine  
 And thrice again, to make up nine.  
 Peace! the charm's wound up.

*Enter MACBETH and BANQUO.*

*Macb.* So foul and fair a day I have not seen.

*Ban.* How far is't called to Forres? What are these  
 So wither'd and so wild in their attire,  
 That look not like the inhabitants o' the earth,  
 And yet are on't? Live you? or are you aught  
 That man may question? You seem to understand me,  
 By each at once her choppy finger laying  
 Upon her skinny lips: you should be women,  
 And yet your beards forbid me to interpret  
 That you are so.

*Macb.* Speak, if you can: what are you?

*First Witch.* All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, thane of  
 Glamis!

*Sec. Witch.* All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, thane of  
 Cawdor!

*Third Witch.* All hail, Macbeth, that shalt be king here-  
 after!

*Ban.* Good sir, why do you start; and seem to fear  
 Things that do sound so fair?—I' the name of truth,  
 Are ye fantastical, or that indeed  
 Which outwardly ye show? My noble partner  
 You greet with present grace and great prediction  
 Of noble having and of royal hope,  
 That he seems rapt withal: to me you speak not.

If you can look into the seeds of time,  
And say which grain will grow and which will not,  
Speak then to me, who neither beg nor fear  
Your favours nor your hate.

60

*First Witch.* Hail!*Sec. Witch.* Hail!*Third Witch.* Hail!*First Witch.* Lesser than Macbeth, and greater. 65*Sec. Witch.* Not so happy, yet much happier.*Third Witch.* Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none:  
So all hail, Macbeth and Banquo!*First Witch.* Banquo and Macbeth, all hail!

*Macb.* Stay, you imperfect speakers, tell me more: 70  
By Sinel's death I know I am thane of Glamis;  
But how of Cawdor? the thane of Cawdor lives,  
A prosperous gentleman; and to be king  
Stands not within the prospect of belief,  
No more than to be Cawdor. Say from whence  
You owe this strange intelligence? or why  
Upon this blasted heath you stop our way  
With such prophetic greeting? Speak, I charge you.

75

[Witches vanish.

*Ban.* The earth hath bubbles, as the water has,  
And these are of them. Whither are they vanish'd? 80

*Macb.* Into the air; and what seem'd corporal melted  
As breath into the wind. Would they had stay'd!

*Ban.* Were such things here as we do speak about?  
Or have we eaten on the insane root  
That takes the reason prisoner?

85

*Macb.* Your children shall be kings.*Ban.* You shall be king.*Macb.* And thane of Cawdor too: went it not so?*Ban.* To the selfsame tune and words. Who's here?*Enter ROSS and ANGUS.*

*Ross.* The king hath happily received, Macbeth,  
The news of thy success; and when he reads  
Thy personal venture in the rebels' fight,  
His wonders and his praises do contend  
Which should be thine or his: silenced with that,  
In viewing o'er the rest o' the selfsame day,  
He finds thee in the stout Norwegian ranks,  
Nothing afeard of what thyself didst make,  
Strange images of death. As thick as hail  
Came post with post; and every one did bear

90

95

Thy praises in his kingdom's great defence,  
And pour'd them down before him.

*Ang.* We are sent  
To give thee from our royal master thanks;  
Only to herald thee into his sight,  
Not pay thee.

*Ross.* And, for an earnest of a greater honour,  
He bade me, from him, call thee thane of Cawdor  
In which addition, hail, most worthy thane!  
For it is thine.

*Ban.* What, can the devil speak true?

*Macb.* The thane of Cawdor lives: why do you dress me  
In borrow'd robes?

*Ang.* Who was the thane lives yet;  
But under heavy judgment bears that life  
Which he deserves to lose. Whether he was combined  
With those of Norway, or did line the rebel  
With hidden help and vantage, or that with both  
He labour'd in his country's wreck, I know not;  
But treasons capital, confess'd and proved,  
Have overthrown him.

*Macb.* [Aside.] Glamis, and thane of Cawdor!  
The greatest is behind. [To Ross and Angus.] Thanks for  
your pains.

[To Ban.] Do you not hope your children shall be kings,  
When those that gave the thane of Cawdor to me  
Promised no less to them?

*Ban.* That trusted home  
Might yet enkindle you unto the crown,  
Besides the thane of Cawdor. But 't is strange:  
And oftentimes, to win us to our harm,  
The instruments of darkness tell us truths,  
Win us with honest trifles, to betray's  
In deepest consequence.  
Cousins, a word, I pray you.

*Macb.* [Aside.] Two truths are told,  
As happy prologues to the swelling act  
Of the imperial theme.—I thank you, gentlemen.

[Aside.] This supernatural soliciting  
Cannot be ill, cannot be good: if ill,  
Why hath it given me earnest of success,  
Commencing in a truth? I am thane of Cawdor:  
If good, why do I yield to that suggestion  
Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair  
And make my seated heart knock at my ribs,

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135

Against the use of nature? Present fears  
 Are less than horrible imaginings:  
 My thought, whose murder yet is but fantastical,  
 Shakes so my single state of man that function  
 Is smother'd in surmise, and nothing is  
 But what is not.

140

*Ban.* Look, how our partner's rapt.

*Macb.* [Aside.] If chance will have me king, why, chance ;  
 may crown me,  
 Without my stir.

*Ban.* New honours come upon him,  
 Like our strange garments, cleave not to their mould  
 But with the aid of use.

145

*Macb.* [Aside.] Come what come may,  
 Time and the hour runs through the roughest day.

*Ban.* Worthy Macbeth, we stay upon your leisure.

*Macb.* Give me your favour: my dull brain was wrought  
 With things forgotten. Kind gentlemen, your pains  
 Are register'd where every day I turn  
 The leaf to read them. Let us toward the king.  
 Think upon what hath chanced, and, at more time,  
 The interim having weigh'd it, let us speak  
 Our free hearts each to other.

150

*Ban.* Very gladly.

*Macb.* Till then, enough. Come, friends.

[Exeunt.]

155

#### SCENE IV. *Forres. The palace.*

*Flourish.* Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN,  
 LENNOX, and Attendants.

*Dun.* Is execution done on Cawdor? Are not  
 Those in commission yet return'd?

*Mal.* My liege,  
 They are not yet come back. But I have spoke  
 With one that saw him die: who did report  
 That very frankly he confess'd his treasons,  
 Implored your highness' pardon and set forth  
 A deep repentance: nothing in his life  
 Became him like the leaving it; he died  
 As one that had been studed in his death  
 To throw away the dearest thing he owed,  
 As 't were a careless trifle.

5

*Dun.* There's no art  
 To find the mind's construction in the face:

10

He was a gentleman on whom I built  
An absolute trust.

*Enter MACBETH, BANQUO, ROSS, and ANGUS.*

O worthiest cousin!

The sin of my ingratitude even now  
Was heavy on me: thou art so far before  
That swiftest wing of recompense is slow  
To overtake thee. Would thou hadst less deserved,  
That the proportion both of thanks and payment  
Might have been mine! only I have left to say,  
More is thy due than more than all can pay.

*Macb.* The service and the loyalty I owe,  
In doing it, pays itself. Your highness' part  
Is to receive our duties; and our duties  
Are to your throne and state children and servants,  
Which do but what they should, by doing every thing  
Safe toward your love and honour.

*Dun.* Welcome hither:  
I have begun to plant thee, and will labour  
To make thee full of growing. Noble Banquo,  
That hast no less deserved, nor must be known  
No less to have done so, let me infold thee  
And hold thee to my heart.

*Ban.* There if I grow,  
The harvest is your own.

*Dun.* My plenteous joys,  
Wanton in fulness, seek to hide themselves  
In drops of sorrow. Sons, kinsmen, thanes,  
And you whose places are the nearest, know  
We will establish our estate upon  
Our eldest, Malcolm, whom we name hereafter  
The Prince of Cumberland; which honour must  
Not unaccompanied invest him only,  
But signs of nobleness, like stars, shall shine  
On all deserves. From hence to Inverness,  
And bind us further to you.

*Macb.* The rest is labour, which is not used for you:  
I'll be myself the harbinger and make joyful  
The hearing of my wife with your approach;  
So humbly take my leave.

*Dun.* My worthy Cawdor!

*Macb. [Aside]* The Prince of Cumberland! that is a step  
On which I must fall down, or else o'erleap,  
For in my way it lies. Stars, hide your fires;

Let not light see my black and deep desires : }  
 The eye wink at the hand; yet let that be, }  
 Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see.

[Exit.

Dun. True, worthy Banquo; he is full so valiant,  
 And in his commendations I am fed ; 55  
 It is a banquet to me. Let's after him,  
 Whose care is gone before to bid us welcome :  
 It is a peerless kinsman.

[Flourish. Exeunt.

SCENE V. Inverness. *Macbeth's castle.*

Enter LADY MACBETH, reading a letter.

Lady M. 'They met me in the day of success: and I have learned by the perfectest report, they have more in them than mortal knowledge. When I burned in desire to question them further, they made themselves air, into which they vanished. Whiles I stood rapt in the wonder of it, came missives from the king, who all-hailed me "Thane of Cawdor"; by which title, before, these weird sisters saluted me, and referred me to the coming on of time, with "Hail, king thou shalt be!" This have I thought good to deliver thee, my dearest partner of greatness, that thou mightst not lose the dues of rejoicing, by being ignorant of what greatness is promised thee. Lay it to thy heart, and farewell.' 12

Glamis thou art, and Cawdor; and shalt be  
 What thou art promised: yet do I fear thy nature;  
 It is too full o' the milk of human kindness ) 15  
 To catch the nearest way: thou wouldest be great;  
 Art not without ambition, but without  
 The illness should attend it: what thou wouldest highly,  
 That wouldest thou holily; wouldest not play false,  
 And yet wouldest wrongly win: thou'ldst have, great Glamis,  
 That which cries 'Thus thou must do, if thou have it'; 21  
 And that which rather thou dost fear to do  
 Than wisthest should be undone. Hie thee hither,  
 That I may pour my spirits in thine ear;  
 And chastise with the valour of my tongue  
 All that impedes thee from the golden round,  
 Which fate and metaphysical aid doth seem  
 To have thee crown'd withal.

Enter a Messenger.

What is your tidings?

Mess. The king comes here to-night.

Lady M. Thou'rt mad to say it:

Is not thy master with him? who, were't so,  
Would have inform'd for preparation.

30

*Mess.* So please you, it is true: our thane is coming:  
One of my fellows had the speed of him,  
Who, almost dead for breath, had scarcely more  
Than would make up his message.

*Lady M.* Give him tending; 35  
He brings great news. [Exit Messenger.]

The raven himself is hoarse  
That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan  
Under my battlements. Come, you spirits  
That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,  
And fill me from the crown to the toe top-full  
Of direst cruelty! make thick my blood; 40  
Stop up the access and passage to remorse,  
That no compunctionous visitings of nature  
Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between  
The effect and it! Come to my woman's breasts,  
And take my milk for gall, you murdering ministers, 45  
Wherever in your sightless substances  
You wait on nature's mischief! Come, thick night,  
And pall thee in the dunkest smoke of hell,  
That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,  
Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark, 50  
To cry 'Hold, hold!'

*Enter MACBETH.*

Great Glamis! worthy Cawdor!  
Greater than both, by the all-hail hereafter!  
Thy letters have transported me beyond  
This ignorant present, and I feel now  
The future in the instant. 55

*Macb.* My dearest love,  
Duncan comes here to-night.

*Lady M.* And when goes hence?

*Macb.* To-morrow, as he purposes.

*Lady M.* O, never  
Shall sun that morrow see!  
Your face, my thane, is as a book where men  
May read strange matters. To beguile the time, 60  
Look like the time; bear welcome in your eye,  
Your hand, your tongue: look like the innocent flower,  
But be the serpent under't. He that's coming  
Must be provided for: and you shall put  
This night's great business into my dispatch;

60

65

Which shall to all our nights and days to come  
Give solely sovereign sway and masterdom.

*Macb.* We will speak further.

*Lady M.* Only look up clear;  
To alter favour ever is to fear: 70  
Leave all the rest to me. [Exeunt.

SCENE VI. *Before Macbeth's castle.*

*Hautboys and torches.* Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, BANQUO, LENNOX, MACDUFF, ROSS, ANGUS, and Attendants.

*Dun.* This castle hath a pleasant seat; the air  
Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself  
Unto our gentle senses.

*Ban.* This guest of summer,  
The temple-haunting martlet, does approve,  
By his loved mansionry, that the heaven's breath  
Smells wooingly here: no jutty, frieze,  
Buttress, nor coign of vantage, but this bird  
Hath made his pendent bed and procreant cradle:  
Where they most breed and haunt, I have observed,  
The air is delicate.

111

5

Enter LADY MACBETH.

*Dun.* See, see, our honour'd hostess!  
The love that follows us sometime is our trouble,  
Which still we thank as love. Herein I teach you  
How you shall bid God 'ild us for your pains,  
And thank us for your trouble.

*Lady M.* All our service  
In every point twice done and then done double  
Were poor and single business to contend  
Against those honours deep and broad wherewith  
Your majesty loads our house: for those of old,  
And the late dignities heap'd up to them,  
We rest your hermits.

*Dun.* Where's the thane of Cawdor?  
We coursed him at the heels, and had a purpose  
To be his purveyor: but he rides well;  
And his great love, sharp as his spur, hath holp him  
To his home before us. Fair and noble hostess,  
We are your guest to-night.

*Lady M.* Your servants ever  
Have theirs, themselves and what is theirs, in compt,

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20

25

To make their audit at your highness' pleasure,  
Still to return your own.

*Dun.* Give me your hand;  
Conduct me to mine host: we love him highly,  
And shall continue our graces towards him.  
By your leave, hostess.

[Exit]

SCENE VII. *Macbeth's castle.*

*Hautboys and torches.* Enter a Sewer and divers Servants  
with dishes and service and pass over the stage. Then  
enter MACBETH.

*Macb.* If it were done when 't is done, then 't were well  
It were done quickly: if the assassination  
Could trammel up the consequence, and catch  
With his surcease success; that but this blow  
Might be the be-all and the end-all here,  
But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,  
We 'ld jump the life to come. But in these cases  
We still have judgment here; that we but teach  
Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return  
To plague the inventor: this even-handed justice  
Commends the ingredients of our poison'd chalice  
To our own lips. He's here in double trust;  
First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,  
Strong both against the deed; then, as his host,  
Who should against his murderer shut the door,  
Not bear the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan  
Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been  
So clear in his great office, that his virtues  
Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against  
The deep damnation of his taking-off;  
And pity, like a naked new-born babe,  
Striding the blast, or heaven's cherubim, horsed  
Upon the sightless couriers of the air,  
Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,  
That tears shall drown the wind. I have no spur  
To prick the sides of my intent, but only  
Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself  
And falls on the other.

*Enter LADY MACBETH.*

How now! what news?

*Lady M.* He has almost supp'd: why have you left the  
chamber?

*Macb.* Hath he ask'd for me?

*Lady M.* Know you not he has?

30

*Macb.* We will proceed no further in this business:

He hath honour'd me of late; and I have bought  
Golden opinions from all sorts of people,  
Which would be worn now in their newest gloss,  
Not cast aside so soon.

*Lady M.* Was the hope drunk

35

Wherein you dress'd yourself? hath it slept since?  
And wakes it now, to look so green and pale  
At what it did so freely? From this time  
Such I account thy love. Art thou afeard  
To be the same in thine own act and valour  
As thou art in desire? Wouldest thou have that  
Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,  
And live a coward in thine own esteem,  
Letting 'I dare not' wait upon 'I would',  
Like the poor cat i' the adage?

*Macb.* Prithee, peace:

45

I dare do all that may become a man;  
Who dares do more is none.

*Lady M.* What beast was't, then,  
That made you break this enterprise to me?  
When you durst do it, then you were a man;  
And, to be more than what you were, you would  
Be so much more the man. Nor time nor place  
Did then adhere, and yet you would make both:  
They have made themselves, and that their fitness now  
Does unmake you. I have given suck, and know  
How tender 't is to love the babe that milks me:  
I would, while it was smiling in my face,  
Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums,  
And dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn as you  
Have done to this.

50

55

*Macb.* If we should fail?

*Lady M.* We fail!

60

But screw your courage to the sticking-place,  
And we'll not fail. When Duncan is asleep—  
Whereto the rather shall his day's hard journey  
Soundly invite him—his two chamberlains  
Will I with wine and wassail so convince  
That memory, the warder of the brain,  
Shall be a fume, and the receipt of reason  
A limbeck only: when in swinish sleep  
Their drenched natures lie as in a death,

65

What cannot you and I perform upon  
The unguarded Duncan? what not put upon  
His spongy officers, who shall bear the guilt  
Of our great quell?

70

*Macb.* Bring forth men-children only;  
For thy undaunted mettle should compose  
Nothing but males. Will it not be received,  
When we have mark'd with blood those sleepy two  
Of his own chamber and used their very daggers,  
That they have done't?

75

*Lady M.* Who dares receive it other,  
As we shall make our grief and clamour roar  
Upon his death?

*Macb.* I am settled, and bend up  
Each corporal agent to this terrible feat.  
Away, and mock the time with fairest show:  
False face must hide what the false heart doth know.

80

[*Exeunt.*]

## ACT II.

SCENE I. *Court of Macbeth's castle.*

*Enter* BANQUO, and FLEANCE bearing a torch before him.

*Ban.* How goes the night, boy?

*Fle.* The moon is down; I have not heard the clock.

*Ban.* And she goes down at twelve.

*Fle.*

I take't, 't is later, sir.

*Ban.* Hold, take my sword. There's husbandry in heaven; Their candles are all out. Take thee that too.

5

A heavy summons lies like lead upon me,  
And yet I would not sleep: merciful powers,  
Restrain in me the cursed thoughts that nature  
Gives way to in repose!

*Enter* MACBETH, and a Servant with a torch.

Give me my sword.

Who's there?

10

*Macb.* A friend.

*Ban.* What, sir, not yet at rest? The king's a-bed:  
He hath been in unusual pleasure, and  
Sent forth great largess to your offices.  
This diamond he greets your wife withal,

15

By the name of most kind hostess; and shut up  
In measureless content.

*Macb.* Being unprepared,  
Our will became the servant to defect;  
Which else should free have wrought.

*Ban.* All's well.  
I dreamt last night of the three weird sisters:      20  
To you they have show'd some truth.

*Macb.* I think not of them  
Yet, when we can entreat an hour to serve,  
We would spend it in some words upon that business,  
If you would grant the time.

*Ban.* At your kind'st leisure.  
*Macb.* If you shall cleave to my consent, when 't is,      25  
It shall make honour for you.

*Ban.* So I lose none  
In seeking to augment it, but still keep  
My bosom franchised and allegiance clear,  
I shall be counsell'd.

*Macb.* Good repose the while!  
*Ban.* Thanks, sir: the like to you!      30

[*Exeunt Banquo and Fleance.*

*Macb.* Go bid thy mistress, when my drink is ready,  
She strike upon the bell. Get thee to bed. [Exit Servant.  
Is this a dagger which I see before me,  
The handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch thee.  
I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.      35  
Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible  
To feeling as to sight? or art thou but  
A dagger of the mind, a false creation,  
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain?  
I see thee yet, in form as palpable      40  
As this which now I draw.

Thou marshall'st me the way that I was going;  
And such an instrument I was to use.  
Mine eyes are made the fools o' the other senses,  
Or else worth all the rest; I see thee still,      45  
And on thy blade and dudgeon gouts of blood,  
Which was not so before. There's no such thing:  
It is the bloody business which informs  
Thus to mine eyes. Now o'er the one-half world  
Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse  
The curtained sleep; witchcraft celebrates  
Pale Hecate's offerings, and wither'd murder,  
Alarum'd by his sentinel, the wolf,      50

Whose howl's his watch, thus with his stealthy pace,  
 Moves like a ghost. Thou sure and firm-set earth,  
 Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear  
 Thy very stones prate of my whereabout,  
 And take the present horror from the time,  
 Which now suits with it. Whiles I threat, he lives:  
 Words to the heat of deeds too cold breath gives.

55

[*A bell rings.*]

I go, and it is done; the bell invites me.

Hear it not, Duncan; for it is a knell

That summons thee to heaven or to hell.

[*Exit.*]SCENE II. *The same.**Enter LADY MACBETH.*

*Lady M.* That which hath made them drunk hath made  
 me bold;  
 What hath quench'd them hath given me fire. Hark! Peace!  
 It was the owl that shriek'd, the fatal bellman,  
 Which gives the stern'st good-night. He is about it:  
 The doors are open; and the surfeited grooms  
 Do mock their charge with snores: I have drugg'd their  
 possets,  
 That death and nature do contend about them,  
 Whether they live or die.

5

*Enter MACBETH above, for a moment.**Macb.* Who's there? what, ho!

*Lady M.* Alack, I am afraid they have awaked,  
 And 't is not done. The attempt and not the deed  
 Confounds us. Hark! I laid their daggers ready;  
 He could not miss 'em. Had he not resembled  
 My father as he slept, I had done 't.

10

*Enter MACBETH.*

My husband!

*Macb.* I have done the deed. Didst thou not hear a noise?*Lady M.* I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry.

16

*Macb.* Did not you speak?*Lady M.* When? Now?*Macb.* As I descended.*Lady M.* I!*Macb.* Hark!

Who lies i' the second chamber?

*Lady M.*

Donalbain.

20

*Macb.* This is a sorry sight. [Looking on his hands.*Lady M.* A foolish thought, to say a sorry sight.*Macb.* There's one did laugh in 's sleep, and one cried  
‘Murder!’

That they did wake each other: I stood and heard them:

But they did say their prayers, and address'd them 25

Again to sleep.

*Lady M.* There are two lodged together.*Macb.* One cried ‘God bless us!’ and ‘Amen’ the other;  
As they had seen me with these hangman's hands.Listening their fear, I could not say ‘Amen’,  
When they did say ‘God bless us!’*Lady M.* Consider it not so deeply.*Macb.* But wherefore could not I pronounce ‘Amen?’ 31  
I had most need of blessing, and ‘Amen’  
Stuck in my throat.*Lady M.* These deeds must not be thought  
After these ways; so, it will make us mad.*Macb.* Methought I heard a voice cry ‘Sleep no more! 35  
Macbeth does murder sleep’, the innocent sleep,  
Sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleeve of care,  
The death of each day's life, sore labour's bath,  
Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,  
Chief nourisher in life's feast,—*Lady M.* What do you mean?*Macb.* Still it cried ‘Sleep no more!’ to all the house:  
‘Glamis hath murder'd sleep, and therefore Cawdor  
Shall sleep no more; Macbeth shall sleep no more’.*Lady M.* Who was it that thus cried? Why, worthy thane,  
You do unbend your noble strength, to think 45  
So brainsickly of things. Go get some water,  
And wash this filthy witness from your hand.  
Why did you bring these daggers from the place?  
They must lie there: go carry them; and smear  
The sleepy grooms with blood.*Macb.* I'll go no more: 50  
I am afraid to think what I have done;  
Look on't again I dare not.*Lady M.* Infirm of purpose!  
Give me the daggers: the sleeping and the dead  
Are but as pictures: 't is the eye of childhood  
That fears a painted devil. If he do bleed, 55  
I'll gild the faces of the grooms withal;  
For it must seem their guilt. [Exit. Knocking within.

*Macb.* Whence is that knocking?  
 How is't with me, when every noise appals me?  
 What hands are here? ha! they pluck out mine eyes.  
 Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood  
 Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather  
 The multitudinous seas incarnadine,  
 Making the green one red.

60

*Re-enter LADY MACBETH.*

*Lady M.* My hands are of your colour; but I shame  
 To wear a heart so white. [Knocking within.] I hear a  
 knocking 65  
 At the south entry: retire we to our chamber:  
 A little water clears us of this deed:  
 How easy is it, then! Your constancy  
 Hath left you unattended. [Knocking within.] Hark! more  
 knocking.  
 Get on your nightgown, lest occasion call us,  
 And show us to be watchers. Be not lost  
 So poorly in your thoughts.

70

*Macb.* To know my deed, 't were best not know myself.  
 [Knocking within.]  
 Wake Duncan with thy knocking! I would thou couldst!  
 [Exeunt.]

SCENE III. *The same.*

*Knocking within.* Enter a Porter.

*Porter.* Here's a knocking indeed! If a man were porter  
 of hell-gate, he should have old turning the key. [Knocking  
 within.] Knock, knock, knock! Who's there, i' the name  
 of Beelzebub? Here's a farmer, that hanged himself on the  
 expectation of plenty: come in time; have napkins enow  
 about you; here you'll sweat for 't. [Knocking within.]  
 Knock, knock! Who's there, in the other devil's name?  
 Faith, here's an equivocator, that could swear in both the  
 scales against either scale; who committed treason enough  
 for God's sake, yet could not equivocate to heaven: O, come  
 in, equivocator. [Knocking within.] Knock, knock, knock!  
 Who's there? Faith, here's an English tailor come hither,  
 for stealing out of a French hose: come in, tailor; here you  
 may roast your goose. [Knocking within.] Knock, knock;  
 never at quiet! What are you? But this place is too cold  
 for hell. I'll devil-porter it no further: I had thought to  
 have let in some of all professions that go the primrose way

to the everlasting bonfire. [Knocking within.] Anon, anon!  
I pray you, remember the porter. [Opens the gate.]

*Enter MACDUFF and LENNOX.*

*Macd.* Was it so late, friend, ere you went to bed, 20  
That you do lie so late?

*Port.* 'Faith, sir, we were carousing till the second cock.

*Macd.* Is thy master stirring?

*Enter MACBETH.*

Our knocking has awaked him; here he comes.

*Len.* Good morrow, noble sir.

*Macb.* Good morrow, both. 25

*Macd.* Is the king stirring, worthy thane?

*Macb.* Not yet.

*Macd.* He did command me to call timely on him:  
I have almost slipp'd the hour.

*Macb.* I'll bring you to him.

*Macd.* I know this is a joyful trouble to you;  
But yet 't is one.

*Macb.* The labour we delight in physics pain.  
This is the door.

*Macd.* I'll make so bold to call,  
For 't is my limited service.

[Exit.]

*Len.* Goes the king hence to-day?

*Macb.* He does: he did appoint so.

*Len.* The night has been unruly: where we lay, 35  
Our chimneys were blown down; and, as they say,  
Lamentings heard i' the air; strange screams of death,  
And prophesying with accents terrible  
Of dire combustion and confused events  
New hatch'd to the woeful time: the obscure bird  
Clamour'd the livelong night: some say, the earth  
Was feverous and did shake.

*Macb.* 'T was a rough night.

*Len.* My young remembrance cannot parallel  
A fellow to it.

*Re-enter MACDUFF.*

*Macd.* O horror, horror, horror! Tongue nor heart 45  
Cannot conceive nor name thee!

*Macb.* }

*Len.* }

What's the matter?

*Macd.* Confusion now hath made his masterpiece!  
Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope

The Lord's anointed temple, and stole thence  
The life o' the building !

*Macb.* What is 't you say? the life? 50

*Len.* Mean you his majesty?

*Macd.* Approach the chamber, and destroy your sight  
With a new Gorgon : do not bid me speak ;  
See, and then speak yourselves.

[*Exeunt Macbeth and Lennox.*

Awake, awake !

Ring the alarum-bell. Murder and treason !

55

Banquo and Donalbain ! Malcolm ! awake !

Shake off this downy sleep, death's counterfeit,  
And look on death itself ! up, up, and see

The great doom's image ! Malcolm ! Banquo !

As from your graves rise up, and walk like sprites,

60

To countenance this horror ! Ring the bell. [Bell rings.]

*Enter LADY MACBETH.*

*Lady M.* What's the business,  
That such a hideous trumpet calls to parley  
The sleepers of the house ? speak, speak !

*Macd.* O gentle lady,  
'T is not for you to hear what I can speak : 65  
The repetition, in a woman's ear,  
Would murder as it fell.

*Enter BANQUO.*

O Banquo, Banquo,  
Our royal master's murder'd !

*Lady M.* Woe, alas !  
What, in our house ?

*Ban.* Too cruel any where.  
Dear Duff, I prithee, contradict thyself,  
And say it is not so. 70

*Re-enter MACBETH and LENNOX, with ROSS.*

*Macb.* Had I but died an hour before this chance,  
I had lived a blessed time ; for, from this instant,  
There's nothing serious in mortality :  
All is but toys : renown and grace is dead ;  
The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees  
Is left this vault to brag of. 75

*Enter MALCOLM and DONALBAIN.*

*Don.* What is amiss ?

*Macb.* You are, and do not know't :

The spring, the nead, the fountain of your blood  
Is stopp'd; the very source of it is stopp'd.

80

*Macd.* Your royal father's murder'd.

*Mal.*

O, by whom?

*Len.* Those of his chamber, as it seem'd, had done't:  
Their hands and faces were all badged with blood;  
So were their daggers, which unwiped we found  
Upon their pillows:

85

They stared, and were distracted; no man's life  
Was to be trusted with them.

*Macb.* O, yet I do repent me of my fury,  
That I did kill them.

*Macd.*

Wherefore did you so?

*Macb.* Who can be wise, amazed, temperate and furious,  
Loyal and neutral, in a moment? No man: 91  
The expedition of my violent love  
Outrun the pauser, reason. Here lay Duncan,  
His silver skin laced with his golden blood;  
And his gash'd stabs look'd like a breach in nature  
For ruin's wasteful entrance: there, the murderers,  
Steep'd in the colours of their trade, their daggers  
Unmannerly breech'd with gore: who could refrain,  
That had a heart to love, and in that heart  
Courage to make's love known?

95

*Lady M.*

Help me hence, ho!

100

*Macd.* Look to the lady.

*Mal.* [Aside to *Don.*] Why do we hold our tongues,  
That most may claim this argument for ours?

*Don.* [Aside to *Mal.*] What should be spoken here, where  
our fate,  
Hid in an auger-hole, may rush, and seize us?  
Let's away;

105

Our tears are not yet brew'd.

*Mal.* [Aside to *Don.*] Nor our strong sorrow  
Upon the foot of motion.

*Ban.*

Look to the lady:

[*Lady Macbeth is carried out.*

And when we have our naked frailties hid,  
That suffer in exposure, let us meet,  
And question this most bloody piece of work,  
To know it further. Fears and scruples shake us:  
In the great hand of God I stand; and thence  
Against the undivulged pretence I fight  
Of treasonous malice.

110

*Macd.*

And so do I.

*All.*

So all.

*Macb.* Let's briefly put on manly readiness,  
And meet i' the hall together.

115

*All.*

Well contented.

[*Exeunt all but Malcolm and Donalbain.*]*Mal.* What will you do? Let's not consort with them:  
To show an unfelt sorrow is an office

Which the false man does easy. I'll to England.

*Don.* To Ireland, I; our separate fortune  
Shall keep us both the safer: where we are,  
There's daggers in men's smiles: the near in blood,  
The nearer bloody.

120

*Mal.* This murderous shaft that's shot  
Hath not yet lighted, and our safest way  
Is to avoid the aim. Therefore, to horse;  
And let us not be dainty of leave-taking,  
But shift away: there's warrant in that theft  
Which steals itself, when there's no mercy left.

125

[*Exeunt.*]SCENE IV. *Outside Macbeth's castle.**Enter Ross and an old Man.**Old M.* Threescore and ten I can remember well:  
Within the volume of which time I have seen  
Hours dreadful and things strange; but this sore night  
Hath trifled former knowings.*Ross.* Ah, good father,  
Thou seest, the heavens, as troubled with man's act,  
Threaten his bloody stage: by the clock, 't is day,  
And yet dark night strangles the travelling lamp:  
Is 't night's predominance, or the day's shame,  
That darkness does the face of earth entomb,  
When living light should kiss it?

5

*Old M.* 'T is unnatural,  
Even like the deed that's done. On Tuesday last,  
A falcon, towering in her pride of place,  
Was by a mousing owl hawk'd at and kill'd.

10

*Ross.* And Duncan's horses—a thing most strange and  
certain—  
Beauteous and swift, the minions of their race,  
Turn'd wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out,  
Contending 'gainst obedience, as they would make  
War with mankind.

15

*Old M.* 'T is said they eat each other.

*Ross.* They did so, to the amazement of mine eyes  
That look'd upon't. Here comes the good Macduff.

20

*Enter MACDUFF.*

How goes the world, sir, now?

*Macd.* Why, see you not?

*Ross.* Is't known who did this more than bloody deed?

*Macd.* Those that Macbeth hath slain.

*Ross.* Alas, the day!

What good could they pretend?

*Macd.* They were suborn'd:

Malcolm and Donalbain, the king's two sons,  
Are stol'n away and fled; which puts upon them  
Suspicion of the deed.

25

*Ross.* 'Gainst nature still!

Thriftless ambition, that wilt ravin up  
Thine own life's means! Then 't is most like  
The sovereignty will fall upon Macbeth.

30

*Macd.* He is already named, and gone to Scone  
To be invested.

*Ross.* Where is Duncan's body?

*Macd.* Carried to Colmekill,  
The sacred storehouse of his predecessors,  
And guardian of their bones.

35

*Ross.* Will you to Scone?

*Macd.* No, cousin, I'll to Fife.

*Ross.* Well, I will thither.

*Macd.* Well, may you see things well done there: adieu!  
Lest our old robes sit easier than our new!

*Ross.* Farewell, father.

*Old M.* God's benison go with you; and with those  
That would make good of bad, and friends of foes! [Exeunt.

40

### ACT III.

SCENE I. *Forres. The palace.*

*Enter BANQUO.*

*Ban.* Thou hast it now: king, Cawdor, Glamis, all,  
As the weird women promised, and, I fear,  
Thou play'dst most foully for't: yet it was said  
It should not stand in thy posterity,

But that myself should be the root and father  
Of many kings. If there come truth from them—  
As upon thee, Macbeth, their speeches shine—  
Why, by the verities on thee made good,  
May they not be my oracles as well,  
And set me up in hope? But hush! no more.

5

10

*Sennet sounded.* Enter MACBETH, as king, LADY MACBETH, as queen, LENNOX, ROSS, Lords, Ladies, and Attendants.

*Macb.* Here's our chief guest.

*Lady M.* If he had been forgotten,  
It had been as a gap in our great feast,  
And all-thing unbecoming.

*Macb.* To-night we hold a solemn supper, sir,  
And I'll request your presence.

*Ban.* Let your highness  
Command upon me; to the which my duties  
Are with a most indissoluble tie  
For ever knit.

15

*Macb.* Ride you this afternoon?

*Ban.* Ay, my good lord.

*Macb.* We should have else desired your good advice,  
Which still hath been both grave and prosperous,  
In this day's council; but we'll take to-morrow.  
Is't far you ride?

20

*Ban.* As far, my lord, as will fill up the time  
'Twixt this and supper: go not my horse the better,  
I must become a borrower of the night  
For a dark hour or twain.

25

*Macb.* Fail not our feast.

*Ban.* My lord, I will not.

*Macb.* We hear, our bloody cousins are bestow'd  
In England and in Ireland, not confessing  
Their cruel parricide, filling their hearers  
With strange invention: but of that to-morrow,  
When therewithal we shall have cause of state  
Craving us jointly. Hie you to horse: adieu,  
Till you return at night. Goes Fleance with you?

30

*Ban.* Ay, my good lord: our time does call upon's.

*Macb.* I wish your horses swift and sure of foot;  
And so I do commend you to their backs.

Farewell.

[Exit Banquo.]

35

Let every man be master of his time  
Till seven at night: to make society  
The sweeter welcome, we will keep ourself

40

Till supper-time alone: while then, God be with you!

[*Exeunt all but Macbeth, and an attendant.*

Sirrah, a word with you: attend those men 45  
Our pleasure?

*Atten.* They are, my lord, without the palace gate.

*Macb.* Bring them before us. [*Exit Attendant.*

To be thus is nothing,

But to be safely thus.—Our fears in Banquo

Stick deep; and in his royalty of nature 50

Reigns that which would be fear'd: 't is much he dares;

And, to that dauntless temper of his mind,

He hath a wisdom that doth guide his valour

To act in safety. There is none but he

Whose being I do fear: and, under him, 55

My Genius is rebuked; as, it is said,

Mark Antony's was by Cæsar. He chid the sisters

When first they put the name of king upon me,

And bade them speak to him: then prophet-like

They hail'd him father to a line of kings: 60

Upon my head they placed a fruitless crown,

And put a barren sceptre in my gripe,

Thence to be wrench'd with an unlineal hand,

No son of mine succeeding. If 't be so,

For Banquo's issue have I filed my mind;

For them the gracious Duncan have I murder'd;

Put rancours in the vessel of my peace

Only for them; and mine eternal jewel

Given to the common enemy of man,

To make them kings, the seed of Banquo kings! 65

Rather than so, come fate into the list,

And champion me to the utterance! Who's there?

*Re-enter Attendant, with two Murderers.*

Now go to the door, and stay there till we call.

[*Exit Attendant.*

Was it not yesterday we spoke together?

*First Mur.* It was, so please your highness.

*Macb.* Well then, now

Have you consider'd of my speeches? Know

That it was he in the times past which held you

So under fortune, which you thought had been

Our innocent self: this I made good to you

In our last conference, pass'd in probation with you, 76

How you were borne in hand, how cross'd, the instruments,

Who wrought with them, and all things else that might

To half a soul and to a notion crazed  
Say 'Thus did Banquo'.

*First Mur.* You made it known to us.

*Macb.* I did so, and went further, which is now  
Our point of second meeting. Do you find  
Your patience so predominant in your nature  
That you can let this go? Are you so gospell'd  
To pray for this good man and for his issue,  
Whose heavy hand hath bow'd you to the grave  
And beggar'd yours for ever?

*First Mur.* We are men, my liege.

*Macb.* Ay, in the catalogue ye go for men;  
As hounds and greyhounds, mongrels, spaniels, curs,  
Shoughs, water-rugs and demi-wolves are clept  
All by the name of dogs: the valued file  
Distinguishes the swift, the slow, the subtle,  
The housekeeper, the hunter, every one  
According to the gift which bounteous nature  
Hath in him closed, whereby he does receive  
Particular addition, from the bill  
That writes them all alike: and so of men  
Now, if you have a station in the file,  
Not in the worst rank of manhood, say it;  
And I will put that business in your bosoms.  
Whose execution takes your enemy off,  
Grapples you to the heart and love of us,  
Who wear our health but sickly in his life,  
Which in his death were perfect.

*Sec. Mur.* I am one, my liege,  
Whom the vile blows and buffets of the world  
Have so incensed that I am reckless what  
I do to spite the world.

*First Mur.* And I another  
So weary with disasters, tugg'd with fortune,  
That I would set my life on any chance,  
To mend it, or be rid on't.

*Macb.* Both of you  
Know Banquo was your enemy.

*Both Mur.* True, my lord.

*Macb.* So is he mine; and in such bloody distance,  
That every minute of his being thrusts  
Against my near'st of life: and though I could  
With barefaced power sweep him from my sight  
And bid my will avouch it, yet I must not,  
For certain friends that are both his and mine,

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Whose loves I may not drop, but wail his fall  
 Who I myself struck down: and thence it is,  
 That I to your assistance do make love,  
 Masking the business from the common eye  
 For sundry weighty reasons.

125

*Sec. Mur.* We shall, my lord,  
 Perform what you command us.

*First Mur.* Though our lives—

*Macb.* Your spirits shine through you. Within this hour  
 at most

I will advise you where to plant yourselves;  
 Acquaint you with the perfect spy o' the time,  
 The moment on't; for 't must be done to-night,  
 And something from the palace; always thought  
 That I require a clearness: and with him—  
 To leave no rubs nor botches in the work—  
 Fleance his son, that keeps him company,  
 Whose absence is no less material to me  
 Than is his father's, must embrace the fate  
 Of that dark hour. Resolve yourselves apart:  
 I'll come to you anon.

130

135

*Both Mur.* We are resolved, my lord.

*Macb.* I'll call upon you straight: abide within.

[*Exeunt Murderers.*

It is concluded. Banquo, thy soul's flight,  
 If it find heaven, must find it out to-night.

[*Exit.*

## SCENE II. *The palace.*

*Enter LADY MACBETH and a Servant.*

*Lady M.* Is Banquo gone from court?

*Serv.* Ay, madam, but returns again to-night.

*Lady M.* Say to the king, I would attend his leisure  
 For a few words.

*Serv.* Madam, I will. [*Exit.*

*Lady M.* Nought's had, all's spent,  
 Where our desire is got without content:  
 'T is safer to be that which we destroy  
 Than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy.

*Enter MACBETH.*

How now, my lord! why do you keep alone,  
 Of sorriest fancies your companions making,  
 Using those thoughts which should indeed have died

10

With them they think on? Things without all remedy  
Should be without regard: what's done is done.

*Macb.* We have scotch'd the snake, not kill'd it :  
She'll close and be herself, whilst our poor malice  
Remains in danger of her former tooth. 15  
But let the frame of things disjoint, both the worlds suffer,  
Ere we will eat our meal in fear and sleep  
In the affliction of these terrible dreams  
That shake us nightly: better be with the dead,  
Whom we, to gain our place, have sent to peace, 20  
Than on the torture of the mind to lie  
In restless ecstasy. Duncan is in his grave ;  
After life's fitful fever he sleeps well ;  
Treason has done his worst: nor steel, nor poison,  
Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing, 25  
Can touch him further.

*Lady M.* Come on;  
Gentle my lord, sleek o'er your rugged looks;  
Be bright and jovial among your guests to-night.

*Macb.* So shall I, love; and so, I pray, be you:  
Let your remembrance apply to Banquo; 30  
Present him eminence, both with eye and tongue:  
Unsafe the while, that we  
Must lave our honours in these flattering streams,  
And make our faces vizards to our hearts,  
Disguising what they are.

*Lady M.* You must leave this.  
*Macb.* O, full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife!  
Thou know'st that Banquo, and his Fleance, lives.

*Lady M.* But in them nature's copy's not eterne.

*Macb.* There's comfort yet; they are assailable;  
Then be thou jocund: ere the bat hath flown 40  
His cloister'd flight, ere to black Hecate's summons  
The shard-borne beetle with his drowsy hums  
Hath rung night's yawning peal, there shall be done  
A deed of dreadful note.

*Lady M.* What's to be done?  
*Macb.* Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck, 45  
Till thou applaud the deed. Come, seeling night,  
Scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day;  
And with thy bloody and invisible hand  
Cancel and tear to pieces that great bond  
Which keeps me pale! Light thickens; and the crow  
Makes wing to the rooky wood :  
Good things of day begin to droop and drowse;

Whiles night's black agents to their preys do rouse.  
 Thou marvell'st at my words: but hold thee still:  
 Things bad begun make strong themselves by ill.  
 So, prithee, go with me.

55

[Exeunt.]

SCENE III. *A park near the palace.**Enter three Murderers.**First Mur.* But who did bid thee join with us?*Third Mur.* Macbeth.*Sec. Mur.* He needs not our mistrust, since he delivers  
Our offices and what we have to do  
To the direction just.*First Mur.* Then stand with us.  
The west yet glimmers with some streaks of day:  
Now spurs the lated traveller apace  
To gain the timely inn; and near approaches  
The subject of our watch.

5

*Third Mur.* Hark! I hear horses.*Ban. [Within.]* Give us a light there, ho!*Sec. Mur.* Then 't is he: the rest  
That are within the note of expectation  
Already are i' the court.

10

*First Mur.* His horses go about.*Third Mur.* Almost a mile: but he does usually,  
So all men do, from hence to the palace gate  
Make it their walk.*Sec. Mur.* A light, a light!*Enter BANQUO and FLEANCE with a torch.**Third Mur.* 'T is he.*First Mur.* Stand to 't.

15

*Ban.* It will be rain to-night.*First Mur.* Let it come down.

[They set upon Banquo.

*Ban.* O, treachery! Fly, good Fleance, fly, fly, fly!  
Thou mayst revenge. O slave! [Dies. Fleance escapes.*Third Mur.* Who did strike out the light?*First Mur.* Wasn't not the way?*Third Mur.* There's but one down; the son is fled.*Sec. Mur.* We have lost  
Best half of our affair.

21

*First Mur.* Well, let's away, and say how much is done.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE IV. *The same. Hall in the Palace.*

*A banquet prepared. Enter MACBETH, LADY MACBETH, ROSS, LENNOX, Lords, and Attendants.*

*Macb.* You know your own degrees; sit down: at first  
And last the hearty welcome.

*Lords.* Thanks to your majesty.

*Macb.* Ourself will mingle with society,  
And play the humble host.  
Our hostess keeps her state, but in best time  
We will require her welcome.

*Lady M.* Pronounce it for me, sir, to all our friends;  
For my heart speaks they are welcome.

*First Murderer appears at the door.*

*Macb.* See, they encounter thee with their hearts' thanks.  
Both sides are even: here I'll sit i' the midst: 10  
Be large in mirth; anon we'll drink a measure  
The table round. [Approaching the door.] There's blood  
upon thy face.

*Mur.* 'T is Banquo's then.

*Macb.* 'T is better thee without than he within.  
Is he dispatch'd?

*Mur.* My lord, his throat is cut; that I did for him.

*Macb.* Thou art the best o' the cut-throats: yet he's good  
That did the like for Fleance: if thou didst it,  
Thou art the nonpareil.

*Mur.* Most royal sir, 20  
Fleance is 'scaped.

*Macb.* Then comes my fit again: I had else been perfect,  
Whole as the marble, founded as the rock,  
As broad and general as the casing air:  
But now I am cabin'd, cribb'd, confined, bound in  
To saucy doubts and fears. But Banquo's safe? 25

*Mur.* Ay, my good lord: safe in a ditch he bides,  
With twenty trenched gashes on his head;  
The least a death to nature.

*Macb.* Thanks for that:  
There the grown serpent lies; the worm that's fled  
Hath nature that in time will venom breed, 30  
No teeth for the present. Get thee gone: to-morrow  
We'll hear ourselves again. [Exit Murderer.]

*Lady M.* My royal lord,  
You do not give the cheer: the feast is sold  
That is not often vouch'd, while 't is a-making,

'Tis given with welcome : to feed were best at home ;  
From thence the sauce to meat is ceremony ;  
Meeting were bare without it.

*Macb.* Sweet remembrancer !

Now, good digestion wait on appetite,  
And health on both !

*Len.* May't please your highness sit.

[*The Ghost of Banquo enters, and sits in  
Macbeth's place.*

*Macb.* Here had we now our country's honour roof'd, 40  
Were the graced person of our Banquo present ;  
Who may I rather challenge for unkindness  
Than pity for mischance !

*Ross.* His absence, sir,

Lays blame upon his promise. Please't your highness  
To grace us with your royal company.

*Macb.* The table's full.

*Len.* Here is a place reserved, sir.

*Macb.* Where ?

*Len.* Here, my good lord. What is't that moves your  
highness ?

*Macb.* Which of you have done this ?

*Lords.* What, my good lord ?

*Macb.* Thou canst not say I did it : never shake 50  
Thy gory locks at me.

*Ross.* Gentlemen, rise ; his highness is not well.

*Lady M.* Sit, worthy friends : my lord is often thus,  
And bath been from his youth : pray you, keep seat ;  
The fit is momentary ; upon a thought 55  
He will again be well : if much you note him,  
You shall offend him and extend his passion :  
Feed, and regard him not.—Are you a man ?

*Macb.* Ay, and a bold one, that dare look on that  
Which might appal the devil.

*Lady M.* O proper stuff !

This is the very painting of your fear :  
This is the air-drawn dagger which, you said,  
Led you to Duncan. O, these flaws and starts,  
Impostors to true fear, would well become  
A woman's story at a winter's fire, 65  
Authorized by her grandam. Shame itself !  
Why do you make such faces ? When all's done,  
You look but on a stool.

*Macb.* Prithee, see there ! behold ! look ! lo ! how say you ?  
Why, what care I ? If thou canst nod, speak too.

If charnel-houses and our graves must send  
Those that we bury back, our monuments  
Shall be the maws of kites.

[*Ghost vanishes.*]

*Lady M.* What, quite unmann'd in folly?

*Macb.* If I stand here, I saw him.

*Lady M.* Fie, for shame!

*Macb.* Blood hath been shed ere now, i' the olden time, 75  
Ere human statute purged the gentle weal;  
Ay, and since too, murders have been perform'd  
Too terrible for the ear: the time has been,  
That, when the brains were out, the man would die,  
And there an end; but now they rise again,  
With twenty mortal murders on their crowns,  
And push us from our stools: this is more strange  
Than such a murder is.

80

*Lady M.* My worthy lord,  
Your noble friends do lack you.

*Macb.* I do forget.  
Do not muse at me, my most worthy friends;  
I have a strange infirmity, which is nothing  
To those that know me. Come, love and health to all;  
Then I'll sit down. Give me some wine; fill full.

85

*Enter Ghost.*

I drink to the general joy o' the whole table,  
And to our dear friend Banquo, whom we miss;  
Would he were here! to all, and him, we thirst,  
And all to all.

90

*Lords.* Our duties, and the pledge.

*Macb.* Avaunt! and quit my sight! let the earth hide thee!  
Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is cold;  
Thou hast no speculation in those eyes  
Which thou dost glare with!

95

*Lady M.* Think of this, good peers,  
But as a thing of custom: 't is no other;  
Only it spoils the pleasure of the time.

*Macb.* What man dare, I dare:  
Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear,  
The arm'd rhinoceros, or the Hyrcan tiger;  
Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves  
Shall never tremble: or be alive again,  
And dare me to the desert with thy sword;  
If trembling I inhabit then, protest me  
The baby of a girl. Hence, horrible shadow!  
Unreal mockery, hence!

100

105

[*Ghost vanishes.*]

Why, so: being gone,  
I am a man again. Pray you, sit still.  
*Lady M.* You have displaced the mirth, broke the good  
meeting,  
With most admired disorder.

*Macb.* Can such things be, 110  
And overcome us like a summer's cloud,  
Without our special wonder? You make me strange  
Even to the disposition that I owe,  
When now I think you can behold such sights,  
And keep the natural ruby of your cheeks, 115  
When mine is blanch'd with fear.

*Ross.* What sights, my lord?

*Lady M.* I pray you, speak not; he grows worse and worse;  
Question enrages him. At once, good night:  
Stand not upon the order of your going,  
But go at once.

*Len.* Good night; and better health 120  
Attend his majesty!

*Lady M.* A kind good night to all!

[*Exeunt all but Macbeth and Lady M.*

*Macb.* It will have blood; they say, blood will have blood:  
Stones have been known to move and trees to speak;  
Augurs and understood relations have  
By magot-pies and choughs and rooks brought forth 125  
The secret' st man of blood. What is the night?

*Lady M.* Almost at odds with morning, which is which.

*Macb.* How say' st thou, that Macduff denies his person  
At our great bidding?

*Lady M.* Did you send to him, sir?

*Macb.* I hear it by the way; but I will send: 130  
There's not a one of them but in his house  
I keep a servant fee'd. I will to-morrow,  
And betimes I will, to the weird sisters:  
More shall they speak; for now I am bent to know,  
By the worst means, the worst. For mine own good, 135  
All causes shall give way: I am in blood  
Stepp'd in so far that, should I wade no more,  
Returning were as tedious as go o'er:  
Strange things I have in head, that will to hand;  
Which must be acted ere they may be scann'd. 140

*Lady M.* You lack the season of all natures, sleep.

*Macb.* Come, we'll to sleep. My strange and self-abuse  
Is the initiate fear that wants hard use:  
We are yet but young in deed. [*Exeunt.*

[SCENE V. *A heath.*

*Thunder.* Enter the three Witches, meeting HECATE.

First Witch. Why, how now, Hecate! you look angerly.

Hec. Have I not reason, beldams as you are,  
Saucy and overbold? How did you dare  
To trade and traffic with Macbeth  
In riddles and affairs of death;

And I, the mistress of your charms,  
The close contriver of all harms,  
Was never call'd to bear my part,  
Or show the glory of our art?

And, which is worse, all you have done  
Hath been but for a wayward son,  
Spiteful and wrathful, who, as others do  
Loves for his own ends, not for you.

But make amends now: get you gone,  
And at the pit of Acheron

Meet me i' the morning: thither he  
Will come to know his destiny:  
Your vessels and your spells provide,  
Your charms and every thing beside.  
I am for the air; this night I'll spend  
Unto a dismal and a fatal end:

Great business must be wrought ere noon:  
Upon the corner of the moon

There hangs a vaporous drop profound  
I'll catch it ere it come to ground:

And that distil'd by magic sleights  
Shall raise such artificial sprites

As by the strength of their illusion  
Shall draw him on to his confusion:

He shall spurn fate, scorn death, and bear  
His hopes 'bove wisdom, grace, and fear:

And you all know, security is mortals' chiefest enemy.

[*Music and a song within.* 'Come away, come  
away', &c.]

Hark! I am call'd; my little spirit, see,  
Sits in a foggy cloud, and stays for me.

First Witch. Come, let's make haste; she'll soon be back  
again. [Exit.]

SCENE VI. *Forres. The palace.**Enter LENNOX and another Lord.*

*Len.* My former speeches have but hit your thoughts,  
 Which can interpret further: only, I say,  
 Things have been strangely borne. The gracious Duncan  
 Was pitied of Macbeth: marry, he was dead:  
 And the right-valiant Banquo walk'd too late; 5  
 Whom, you may say, if't please you, Fleance kill'd,  
 For Fleance fled: men must not walk too late.  
 Who cannot want the thought how monstrous  
 It was for Malcolm and for Donalbain  
 To kill their gracious father? damned fact!  
 How it did grieve Macbeth! did he not straight 10  
 In pious rage the two delinquents tear,  
 That were the slaves of drink and thralls of sleep?  
 Was not that nobly done? Ay, and wisely too;  
 For't would have anger'd any heart alive  
 To hear the men deny't. So that, I say, 15  
 He has borne all things well: and I do think  
 That had he Duncan's sons under his key—  
 As, an't please heaven, he shall not—they should find  
 What 't were to kill a father; so should Fleance.  
 But, peace! for from broad words and 'cause he fail'd 20  
 His presence at the tyrant's feast, I hear  
 Macduff lives in disgrace: sir, can you tell  
 Where he bestows himself?

*Lord.* The son of Duncan,  
 From whom this tyrant holds the due of birth, 25  
 Lives in the English court, and is received  
 Of the most pious Edward with such grace  
 That the malevolence of fortune nothing  
 Takes from his high respect: thither Macduff  
 Is gone to pray the holy king, upon his aid  
 To wake Northumberland and warlike Siward: 30  
 That, by the help of these—with Him above  
 To ratify the work—we may again  
 Give to our tables meat, sleep to our nights,  
 Free from our feasts and banquets bloody knives,  
 Do faithful homage and receive free honours: 35  
 All which we pine for now: and this report  
 Hath so exasperate their king that he  
 Prepares for some attempt of war.

*Len.* Sent he to Macduff?

*Lord.* He did: and with an absolute 'Sir, not I',  
The cloudy messenger turns me his back,  
And hums, as who should say 'You'll rue the time  
That clogs me with this answer'.

40

*Len.* And that well might  
Advise him to a caution, to hold what distance  
His wisdom can provide. Some holy angel  
Fly to the court of England and unfold  
His message ere he come, that a swift blessing  
May soon return to this our suffering country  
Under a hand accursed!

45

*Lord* I'll send my prayers with him.

[Exeunt.]

## ACT IV.

SCENE I. *A cavern. In the middle, a boiling cauldron.*  
*Thunder.* Enter the three Witches.

*First Witch.* Thrice the brinded cat hath mew'd.

*Sec. Witch.* Thrice, and once the hedge-pig whined.

*Third Witch.* Harpier cries 'Tis time, 'tis time.

*First Witch.* Round about the cauldron go;  
In the poison'd entrails throw.  
Toad, that under cold stone  
Days and nights has thirty one  
Swelter'd venom sleeping got,  
Boil thou first i' the charm'd pot.

5

*All.* Double, double toil and trouble;  
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.

10

*Sec. Witch.* Fillet of a fenny snake,  
In the cauldron boil and bake;  
Eye of newt and toe of frog,  
Wool of bat and tongue of dog,  
Adder's fork and blind-worm's sting,  
Lizard's leg and howlet's wing,  
For a charm of powerful trouble,  
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.

15

*All.* Double, double toil and trouble;  
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.

20

*Third Witch.* Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf  
Witches' mummy, maw and gulf  
Of the ravin'd salt-sea shark,

Root of hemlock digg'd i' the dark, 25  
 Liver of blaspheming Jew,  
 Gall of goat, and slips of yew  
 Sliver'd in the moon's eclipse,  
 Nose of Turk and Tartar's lips,  
 Add thereto a tiger's chadron, 30  
 For the ingredients of our cauldron.

*All.* Double, double toil and trouble;  
 Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.

*Sec. Witch.* Cool it with a baboon's blood,  
 Then the charm is firm and good. 35

[Enter HECATE to the other three Witches.

*Hec.* O, well done! I commend your pains;  
 And every one shall share i' the gains:  
 And now about the cauldron sing,  
 Like elves and fairies in a ring,  
 Enchanting all that you put in. 40

[*Music and a song:* 'Black spirits', &c.  
*Hecate retires.*]

*Sec. Witch.* By the pricking of my thumbs,  
 Something wicked this way comes.  
 Open, locks,  
 Whoever knocks!

Enter MACBETH.

*Macb.* How now, you secret, black, and midnight hags! 45  
 What is't you do?

*All.* A deed without a name.

*Macb.* I conjure you, by that which you profess,  
 Howe'er you come to know it, answer me:  
 Though you untie the winds and let them fight  
 Against the churches; though the yesty waves 50  
 Confound and swallow navigation up;  
 Though bladed corn be lodged and trees blown down;  
 Though castles topple on their warders' heads;  
 Though palaces and pyramids do slope  
 Their heads to their foundations; though the treasure  
 Of nature's germens tumble all together, 55  
 Even till destruction sicken; answer me  
 To what I ask you.

*First Witch.* Speak.

*Sec. Witch.* Demand.

*Third Witch.* We'll answer.

*First Witch.* Say if thou'dst rather hear it from our mouths,  
Or from our masters?

*Macb.* Call 'em; let me see 'em. 60

*First Witch.* Pour in sow's blood, that hath eaten  
Her nine farrow; grease that's sweaten  
From the murderer's gibbet throw  
Into the flame.

*All.* Come, high or low;  
Thyself and office deftly show! 65

*Thunder.* First Apparition: *an armed Head.*

*Macb.* Tell me, thou unknown power,—

*First Witch.* He knows thy thought:  
Hear his speech, but say thou nought.

*First App.* Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth! beware Macduff;  
Beware the thane of Fife. Dismiss me. Enough.

*Macb.* Whate'er thou art, for thy good caution, thanks; 70  
Thou hast harp'd my fear aright: but one word more,—  
*First Witch.* He will not be commanded: here's another,  
More potent than the first.

[*Descends.*]

*Thunder.* Second Apparition: *a bloody Child.*

*Sec. App.* Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth!

*Macb.* Had I three ears, I'd hear thee. 75

*Sec. App.* Be bloody, bold, and resolute; laugh to scorn  
The power of man, for none of woman born  
Shall harm Macbeth.

[*Descends.*]

*Macb.* Then live, Macduff: what need I fear of thee?  
But yet I'll make assurance double sure, 80  
And take a bond of fate: thou shalt not live;  
That I may tell pale-hearted fear it lies,  
And sleep in spite of thunder.

*Thunder.* Third Apparition: *a Child crowned, with a tree  
in his hand.*

What is this

That rises like the issue of a king,  
And wears upon his baby-brow the round 85  
And top of sovereignty?

*All.* Listen, but speak not to 't.

*Third App.* Be lion-mettled, proud; and take no care  
Who chafes, who frets, or where conspirers are:

Macbeth shall never vanquish'd be until  
Great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane hill  
Shall come against him.

90  
[Descends.]

*Macb.* That will never be:  
Who can impress the forest, bid the tree  
Unfix his earth-bound root? Sweet bodements! good!  
Rebellion's head, rise never till the wood  
Of Birnam rise, and our high-placed Macbeth  
Shall live the lease of nature, pay his breath  
To time and mortal custom. Yet my heart  
Throbs to know one thing: tell me, if your art  
Can tell so much: shall Banquo's issue ever  
Reign in this kingdom?

95

*All.* Seek to know no more.

100

*Macb.* I will be satisfied: deny me this,  
And an eternal curse fall on you! Let me know.  
Why sinks that cauldron? and what noise is this?

[Hautboys.]

*First Witch.* Show!

*Sec. Witch.* Show!

105

*Third Witch.* Show!

*All.* Show his eyes, and grieve his heart;  
Come like shadows, so depart!

*A show of Eight Kings, the last with a glass in his hand;*  
*Banquo's Ghost following.*

*Macb.* Thou art too like the spirit of Banquo; down!  
Thy crown does sear mine eye-balls. And thy hair,      110  
Thou other gold-bound brow, is like the first.  
A third is like the former. Filthy hags!  
Why do you show me this? A fourth! Start, eyes!  
What, will the line stretch out till the crack of doom?  
Another yet! A seventh! I'll see no more:      115  
And yet the eighth appears, who bears a glass  
Which shows me many more; and some I see  
That two-fold balls and treble sceptres carry:  
Horrible sight! Now, I see 't is true;  
For the blood-bolter'd Banquo smiles upon me,      120  
And points at them for his. [Apparitions vanish.] What,  
is this so?

[*First Witch.* Ay, sir, all this is so: but why  
Stands Macbeth thus amazedly?  
Come, sisters, cheer we up his sprites,  
And show the best of our delights:      125  
I'll charm the air to give a sound,

While you perform your antic round;  
That this great king may kindly say,  
Our duties did his welcome pay.

[*Music. The Witches dance, and then vanish, with Hecate.*]

*Macb.* Where are they? Gone? Let this pernicious hour  
Stand aye accursed in the calendar! 131  
Come in, without there!

*Enter LENNOX.*

*Len.* What's your grace's will?  
*Macb.* Saw you the weird sisters?  
*Len.* No, my lord.  
*Macb.* Came they not by you?  
*Len.* No, indeed, my lord.  
*Macb.* Infected be the air whereon they ride;  
And damn'd all those that trust them! I did hear 135  
The galloping of horse: who was't came by?

*Len.* 'Tis two or three, my lord, that bring you word  
Macduff is fled to England.

*Macb.* Fled to England!  
*Len.* Ay, my good lord.  
*Macb.* Time, thou anticipatest my dread exploits:  
The flighty purpose never is o'ertook  
Unless the deed go with it: from this moment  
The very firstlings of my heart shall be  
The firstlings of my hand. And even now, 145  
To crown my thoughts with acts, be it thought and done:  
The castle of Macduff I will surprise;  
Seize upon Fife; give to the edge o' the sword  
His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls  
That trace him in his line. No boasting like a fool; 150  
This deed I'll do before this purpose cool.  
But no more sights!—Where are these gentlemen?  
Come, bring me where they are. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II. *Fife. Macduff's castle.*

*Enter LADY MACDUFF, her Son, and ROSS.*

*L. Macd.* What had he done, to make him fly the land?  
*Ross.* You must have patience, madam.  
*L. Macd.* He had none: His flight was madness: when our actions do not,  
Our fears do make us traitors.

*Ross.* You know not  
 Whether it was his wisdom or his fear. 5  
*L. Macd.* Wisdom ! to leave his wife, to leave his babes,  
 His mansion and his titles in a place  
 From whence himself does fly? He loves us not ;  
 He wants the natural touch: for the poor wren,  
 The most diminutive of birds, will fight, 10  
 Her young ones in her nest, against the owl.  
 All is the fear and nothing is the love ;  
 As little is the wisdom, where the flight  
 So runs against all reason.

*Ross.* My dearest coz,  
 I pray you, school yourself : but for your husband, 15  
 He is noble, wise, judicious, and best knows  
 The fits o' the season. I dare not speak much further ;  
 But cruel are the times, when we are traitors  
 And do not know ourselves, when we hold rumour  
 From what we fear, yet know not what we fear, 20  
 But float upon a wild and violent sea  
 Each way and move. I take my leave of you :  
 Shall not be long but I'll be here again :  
 Things at the worst will cease, or else climb upward  
 To what they were before. My pretty cousin, 25  
 Blessing upon you!

*L. Macd.* Father'd he is, and yet he's fatherless.  
*Ross.* I am so much a fool, should I stay longer,  
 It would be my disgrace and your discomfort :  
 I take my leave at once. [Exit. 30

*L. Macd.* Sirrah, your father's dead : 30  
 And what will you do now? How will you live?

*Son.* As birds do, mother.

*L. Macd.* What, with worms and flies?

*Son.* With what I get, I mean ; and so do they.

*L. Macd.* Poor bird ! thou 'ldst never fear the net nor lime,  
 The pitfall nor the gin. 35

*Son.* Why should I, mother? Poor birds they are not set  
 for.

My father is not dead, for all your saying.

*L. Macd.* Yes, he is dead : how wilt thou do for a father?

*Son.* Nay, how will you do for a husband?

*L. Macd.* Why, I can buy me twenty at any market. 40

*Son.* Then you 'll buy 'em to sell again.

*L. Macd.* Thou speak'st with all thy wit ; and yet, i' faith,  
 With wit enough for thee.

*Son.* Was my father a traitor, mother?

*L. Macd.* Ay, that he was  
*Son.* What is a traitor?  
*L. Macd.* Why, one that swears and lies.  
*Son.* And be all traitors that do so?  
*L. Macd.* Every one that does so is a traitor, and must be  
 hanged.

*Son.* And must they all be hanged that swear and lie?

*L. Macd.* Every one.

*Son.* Who must hang them?

*L. Macd.* Why, the honest men.

*Son.* Then the liars and swearers are fools, for there are  
 liars and swearers know to beat the honest men and hang up  
 them.

*L. Macd.* Now, God help thee, poor monkey! But how  
 wilt thou do for a father?

*Son.* If he were dead, you'd weep for him: if you would  
 not, it were a good sign that I should quickly have a new  
 father.

*L. Macd.* Poor prattler, how thou talk'st!

*Enter a Messenger.*

*Mess.* Bless you, fair dame! I am not to you known,  
 Though in your state of honour I am perfect.

I doubt some danger does approach you nearly:

If you will take a homely man's advice,  
 Be not found here; hence, with your little ones.

To fright you thus, methinks, I am too savage;

To do worse to you were fell cruelty,

Which is too nigh your person. Heaven preserve you!

I dare abide no longer.

[*Exit.*]

*L. Macd.* Whither should I fly?  
 I have done no harm. But I remember now  
 I am in this earthly world; where to do harm  
 Is often laudable, to do good sometime  
 Accounted dangerous folly: why then, alas,  
 Do I put up that womanly defence,  
 To say I have done no harm?

*Enter Murderers.*

What are these faces?

*First Mur.* Where is your husband?

*L. Macd.* I hope, in no place so unsanctified  
 Where such as thou mayst find him.

*First Mur.*

He's a traitor.

*Son.* Thou liest, thou shag-hair'd villain!

*First Mur.*

What, you egg!  
[Stabbing him.

Young fry of treachery!

*Son.*

He has kill'd me, mother:

Run away, I pray you!

[Dies.

[Exit Lady Macduff, crying 'Murder!'  
Exeunt Murderers, following her.

SCENE III. *England. Before the King's palace.*

Enter MALCOLM and MACDUFF.

*Mal.* Let us seek out some desolate shade, and there  
Weep our sad bosoms empty.

*Macd.* Let us rather  
Hold fast the mortal sword, and like good men  
Bestride our down-fall'n birthdom: each new morn  
New widows howl, new orphans cry, new sorrows  
Strike heaven on the face, that it resounds  
As if it felt with Scotland and yell'd out  
Like syllable of dolour.

5

*Mal.* What I believe I'll wail,  
What know believe, and what I can redress,  
As I shall find the time to friend, I will.  
What you have spoke, it may be so perchance.  
This tyrant, whose sole name blisters our tongues,  
Was once thought honest: you have loved him well.  
He hath not touch'd you yet. I am young; but something  
You may deserve of him through me, and wisdom  
To offer up a weak poor innocent lamb  
To appease an angry god.

10

*Macd.* I am not treacherous.

*Mal.* But Macbeth is.  
A good and virtuous nature may recoil  
In an imperial charge. But I shall crave your pardon;  
That which you are my thoughts cannot transpose:  
Angels are bright still, though the brightest fell:  
Though all things foul would wear the brows of grace,  
Yet grace must still look so.

20

*Macd.*

I have lost my hopes.

*Mal.* Perchance even there where I did find my doubts.  
Why in that rawness left you wife and child,  
Those precious motives, those strong knots of love,  
Without leave-taking? I pray you,  
Let not my jealousies be your dishonours,

25

But mine own safeties. You may be rightly just,  
Whatever I shall think.

30

*Macd.* Bleed, bleed, poor country!  
Great tyranny! lay thou thy basis sure,  
For goodness dare not check thee: wear thou thy wrongs;  
The title is affeer'd! Fare thee well, lord:  
I would not be the villain that thou think'st  
For the whole space that's in the tyrant's grasp,  
And the rich East to boot.

35

*Mal.* Be not offended:  
I speak not as in absolute fear of you.  
I think our country sinks beneath the yoke;  
It weeps, it bleeds; and each new day a gash  
Is added to her wounds: I think withal  
There would be hands uplifted in my right;  
And here from gracious England have I offer  
Of goodly thousands: but, for all this,  
When I shall tread upon the tyrant's head,  
Or wear it on my sword, yet my poor country  
Shall have more vices than it had before,  
More suffer and more sundry ways than ever,  
By him that shall succeed.

40

*Macd.* What should he be?  
*Mal.* It is myself I mean: in whom I know  
All the particulars of vice so grafted  
That, when they shall be open'd, black Macbeth  
Will seem as pure as snow, and the poor state  
Esteem him as a lamb, being compared  
With my confineless harms.

45

*Macd.* Not in the legions  
Of horrid hell can come a devil more damn'd  
In evils to top Macbeth.

55

*Mal.* I grant him bloody,  
Luxurious, avaricious, false, deceitful,  
Sudden, malicious, smacking of every sin  
That has a name: but there's no bottom, none,  
In my voluptuousness: better Macbeth  
Than such an one to reign.

60

*Macd.* Boundless intemperance  
In nature is a tyranny; it hath been  
The untimely emptying of the happy throne  
And fall of many kings.

*Mal.* With this there grows  
In my most ill-composed affection such  
A staunchless avarice that, were I king,

65

I should cut off the nobles for their lands,  
Desire his jewels and this other's house:  
And my more-having would be as a sauce  
To make me hunger more; that I should forge  
Quarrels unjust against the good and loyal,  
Destroying them for wealth.

*Macd.* This avarice

Sticks deeper, grows with more pernicious root  
Than summer-seeming lust, and it hath been  
The sword of our slain kings: yet do not fear;  
Scotland hath foisons to fill up your will,  
Of your mere own: all these are portable,  
With other graces weigh'd.

*Mal.* But I have none: the king-becoming graces,  
As justice, verity, temperance, stableness,  
Bounty, perseverance, mercy, lowliness,  
Devotion, patience, courage, fortitude,  
I have no relish of them, but abound  
In the division of each several crime,  
Acting it many ways. Nay, had I power, I should  
Pour the sweet milk of concord into hell,  
Uproar the universal peace, confound  
All unity on earth.

*Macd.* O Scotland, Scotland!

*Mal.* If such a one be fit to govern, speak:  
I am as I have spoken.

*Macd.* Fit to govern!  
No, not to live. O nation miserable,  
With an untitled tyrant bloody-scepter'd,  
When shalt thou see thy wholesome days again,  
Since that the truest issue of thy throne  
By his own interdiction stands accursed,  
And does blaspheme his breed? Thy royal father  
Was a most sainted king: the queen that bore thee,  
Oftener upon her knees than on her feet,  
Died every day she lived. Fare thee well!  
These evils thou repeat'st upon thyself  
Have banish'd me from Scotland. O my breast,  
Thy hope ends here!

*Mal.* Macduff, this noble passion,  
Child of integrity, hath from my soul  
Wiped the black scruples, reconciled my thoughts  
To thy good truth and honour. Devilish Macbeth  
By many of these trains hath sought to win me  
Into his power, and modest wisdom plucks me

70

75

85

90

95

100

105

From over-credulous haste: but God above  
 Deal between thee and me! for even now  
 I put myself to thy direction, and  
 Unspeak mine own detraction, here abjure  
 The taints and blames I laid upon myself,  
 For strangers to my nature. I am yet  
 Unknown to woman, never was forsworn,  
 Scarcely have coveted what was mine own,  
 At no time broke my faith, would not betray  
 The devil to his fellow, and delight  
 No less in truth than life: my first false speaking  
 Was this upon myself: what I am truly,  
 Is thine and my poor country's to command:  
 Whither indeed, before thy here-approach,  
 Old Siward, with ten thousand warlike men,  
 Already at a point, was setting forth.  
 Now we'll together; and the chance of goodness  
 Be like our warranted quarrel! Why are you silent?

*Macd.* Such welcome and unwelcome things at once  
 'T is hard to reconcile.

*Enter a Doctor.*

*Mal.* Well; more anon.—Comes the king forth, I pray  
 you?

*Doct.* Ay, sir; there are a crew of wretched souls  
 That stay his cure: their malady convinces  
 The great assay of art; but at his touch—  
 Such sanctity hath heaven given his hand—  
 They presently amend.

*Mal.* I thank you, doctor. [*Exit Doctor.*]

*Macd.* What's the disease he means?

*Mal.* 'T is call'd the evil:  
 A most miraculous work in this good king;  
 Which often, since my here-remain in England,  
 I have seen him do. How he solicits heaven,  
 Himself best knows: but strangely-visited people,  
 All swoln and ulcerous, pitiful to the eye,  
 The mere despair of surgery, he cures,  
 Hanging a golden stamp about their necks,  
 Put on with holy prayers: and 't is spoken,  
 To the succeeding royalty he leaves  
 The healing benediction. With this strange virtue,  
 He hath a heavenly gift of prophecy,  
 And sundry blessings hang about his throne  
 That speak him full of grace.

*Enter Ross.*

*Macd.*

See, who comes here?

*Mal.* My countryman; but yet I know him not.

*Macd.* My ever-gentle cousin, welcome hither.

150

*Mal.* I know him now. Good God, betimes remove  
The means that makes us strangers!

*Ross.*

Sir, amen.

*Macd.* Stands Scotland where it did?

*Ross.* Alas, poor country!

Almost afraid to know itself. It cannot  
Be call'd our mother, but our grave; where nothing, 155  
But who knows nothing, is once seen to smile;  
Where sighs and groans and shrieks that rend the air  
Are made, not mark'd; where violent sorrow seems  
A modern ecstasy: the dead man's knell  
Is there scarce ask'd for who; and good men's lives 160  
Expire before the flowers in their caps,  
Dying or ere they sicken.

*Macd.* O, relation

Too nice, and yet too true!

*Mal.* What's the newest grief?

*Ross.* That of an hour's age doth hiss the speaker:  
Each minute teems a new one.

*Macd.* How does my wife? 165

*Ross.* Why, well.

*Macd.* And all my children?

*Ross.* Well too.

*Macd.* The tyrant has not batter'd at their peace

*Ross.* No; they were well at peace when I did leave 'em.

*Macd.* Be not a niggard of your speech: how goes't?

*Ross.* When I came hither to transport the tidings, 170  
Which I have heavily borne, there ran a rumour  
Of many worthy fellows that were out;  
Which was to my belief witness'd the rather,  
For that I saw the tyrant's power a-foot;  
Now is the time of help; your eye in Scotland 175  
Would create soldiers, make our women fight,  
To doff their dire distresses.

*Mal.* Be't their comfort

We are coming thither: gracious England hath

Lent us good Siward and ten thousand men;

An older and a better soldier none

180

That Christendom gives out.

*Ross.*

Would I could answer

This comfort with the like! But I have words  
That would be howl'd out in the desert air,  
Where hearing should not latch them.

*Macd.* What concern they?  
The general cause? or is it a fee-grief 185  
Due to some single breast?

*Ross.* No mind that's honest  
But in it shares some woe; though the main part  
Pertains to you alone.

*Macd.* If it be mine,  
Keep it not from me, quickly let me have it.

*Ross.* Let not your ears despise my tongue for ever, 190  
Which shall possess them with the heaviest sound  
That ever yet they heard.

*Macd.* Hum! I guess at it.  
*Ross.* Your castle is surprised; your wife and babes  
Savagely slaughter'd: to relate the manner,  
Were, on the quarry of these murder'd deer, 195  
To add the death of you.

*Mal.* Merciful heaven!  
What, man! ne'er pull your hat upon your brows;  
Give sorrow words: the grief that does not speak  
Whispers the o'erfraught heart and bids it break.

*Macd.* My children too?  
*Ross.* Wife, children, servants, all 200  
That could be found.

*Macd.* And I must be from thence!  
My wife kill'd too?

*Ross.* I have said.  
*Mal.* Be comforted:  
Let's make us medicines of our great revenge,  
To cure this deadly grief.

*Macd.* He has no children. All my pretty ones? 205  
Did you say all? O hell-kite! All?  
What, all my pretty chickens and their dam  
At one fell swoop?

*Mal.* Dispute it like a man.  
*Macd.* I shall do so;  
But I must also feel it as a man: 210  
I cannot but remember such things were,  
That were most precious to me. Did heaven look on,  
And would not take their part? Sinful Macduff,  
They were all struck for thee! naught that I am,  
Not for their own demerits, but for mine, 215  
Fell slaughter on their souls. Heaven rest them now!

*Mal.* Be this the whetstone of your sword : let grief  
Convert to anger ; blunt not the heart, enrage it.

*Macd.* O, I could play the woman with mine eyes  
And braggart with my tongue ! But, gentle heavens, 220  
Cut short all intermission ; front to front  
Bring thou this fiend of Scotland and myself ;  
Within my sword's length set him ; if he 'scape,  
Heaven forgive him too !

*Mal.* This tune goes manly.  
Come, go we to the king ; our power is ready ; 225  
Our lack is nothing but our leave : Macbeth  
Is ripe for shaking, and the powers above  
Put on their instruments. Receive what cheer you may :  
The night is long that never finds the day. [Exeunt.

## ACT V.

SCENE I. *Dunsinane. Ante-room in the castle.*

Enter a Doctor of Physic and a Waiting-Gentlewoman.

*Doct.* I have two nights watched with you, but can perceive no truth in your report. When was it she last walked ?

*Gent.* Since his majesty went into the field, I have seen her rise from her bed, throw her nightgown upon her, unlock her closet, take forth paper, fold it, write upon 't, read it, afterwards seal it, and again return to bed ; yet all this while in a most fast sleep. 7

*Doct.* A great perturbation in nature, to receive at once the benefit of sleep, and do the effects of watching ! In this slumbery agitation, besides her walking and other actual performances, what, at any time, have you heard her say ?

*Gent.* That, sir, which I will not report after her. 12

*Doct.* You may to me : and 't is most meet you should.

*Gent.* Neither to you nor any one ; having no witness to confirm my speech.

Enter LADY MACBETH, with a taper.

Lo you, here she comes ! This is her very guise ; and, upon my life, fast asleep. Observe her ; stand close.

*Doct.* How came she by that light ?

*Gent.* Why, it stood by her : she has light by her continually ; 't is her command. 20

*Doct.* You see, her eyes are open.

*Gent.* Ay, but their sense is shut.

*Doct.* What is it she does now? Look, how she rubs her hands.

*Gent.* It is an accustomed action with her, to seem thus washing her hands: I have known her continue in this a quarter of an hour.

*Lady M.* Yet here's a spot.

*Doct.* Hark! she speaks: I will set down what comes from her, to satisfy my remembrance the more strongly. 30

*Lady M.* Out, damned spot! out, I say!—One: two: why, then 't is time to do 't.—Hell is murky!—Fie, my lord, fie! a soldier, and afeard? What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our power to account?—Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him. 35

*Doct.* Do you mark that?

*Lady M.* The thane of Fife had a wife: where is she now?—What, will these hands ne'er be clean?—No more o' that, my lord, no more o' that: you mar all with this starting.

*Doct.* Go to, go to; you have known what you should not.

*Gent.* She has spoke what she should not, I am sure of that: heaven knows what she has known. 42

*Lady M.* Here's the smell of the blood still: all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand. Oh, oh, oh!

*Doct.* What a sigh is there! The heart is sorely charged.

*Gent.* I would not have such a heart in my bosom for the dignity of the whole body.

*Doct.* Well, well, well,—

*Gent.* Pray God it be, sir.

*Doct.* This disease is beyond my practice: yet I have known those which have walked in their sleep who have died holily in their beds. 50

*Lady M.* Wash your hands, put on your nightgown; look not so pale.—I tell you yet again, Banquo's buried: he cannot come out on's grave. 56

*Doct.* Even so?

*Lady M.* To bed, to bed! there's knocking at the gate: come, come, come, come, give me your hand. What's done cannot be undone.—To bed, to bed, to bed! [Exit.

*Doct.* Will she go now to bed? 61

*Gent.* Directly.

*Doct.* Foul whisperings are abroad: unnatural deeds To breed unnatural troubles: infected minds To their deaf pillows will discharge their secrets : 65

More needs she the divine than the physician.  
 God, God forgive us all! Look after her;  
 Remove from her the means of all annoyance,  
 And still keep eyes upon her. So, good night:  
 My mind she has mated, and amazed my sight.  
 I think, but dare not speak.

70

*Gent.* Good night, good doctor.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *The country near Dunsinane.*

*Drum and colours.* Enter MENTEITH, CAITHNESS,  
 ANGUS, LENNOX, and Soldiers.

*Ment.* The English power is near, led on by Malcolm,  
 His uncle Siward and the good Macduff:  
 Revenges burn in them; for their dear causes  
 Would to the bleeding and the grim alarm  
 Excite the mortified man.

*Ang.* Near Birnam wood 5  
 Shall we well meet them; that way are they coming.  
*Caith.* Who knows if Donalbain be with his brother?  
*Len.* For certain, sir, he is not: I have a file  
 Of all the gentry: there is Siward's son,  
 And many unrough youths that even now 10  
 Protest their first of manhood.

*Ment.* What does the tyrant?  
*Caith.* Great Dunsinane he strongly fortifies:  
 Some say he's mad; others that lesser hate him  
 Do call it valiant fury: but, for certain,  
 He cannot buckle his distemper'd cause 15  
 Within the belt of rule.

*Ang.* Now does he feel  
 His secret murders sticking on his hands;  
 Now, minutely, revolts upbraid his faith-breach;  
 Those he commands move only in command,  
 Nothing in love: now does he feel his title 20  
 Hang loose about him, like a giant's robe  
 Upon a dwarfish thief.

*Ment.* Who then shall blame  
 His pester'd senses to recoil and start,  
 When all that is within him does condemn  
 Itself for being there?

*Caith.* Well, march we on, 25  
 To give obedience where 't is truly owed:

Meet we the medicine of the sickly weal,  
And with him pour we in our country's purge  
Each drop of us.

*Len.*      Or so much as it needs,  
To dew the sovereign flower and drown the weeds.      30  
Make we our march towards Birnam.      [Exeunt, marching.

SCENE III. *Dunsinane. A room in the castle.*

*Enter MACBETH, Doctor, and Attendants.*

*Macb.* Bring me no more reports; let them fly all:  
Till Birnam wood remove to Dunsinane,  
I cannot taint with fear. What's the boy Malcolm?  
Was he not born of woman? The spirits that know  
All mortal consequences have pronounced me thus:  
'Fear not, Macbeth; no man that's born of woman  
Shall e'er have power upon thee'. Then fly, false thanes,  
And mingle with the English epicures:  
The mind I sway by and the heart I bear  
Shall never sag with doubt nor shake with fear.

*Enter a Servant.*

The devil damn thee black, thou cream-faced loon !  
Where got'st thou that goose look ?

*Serv.* There is ten thousand—

*Macb.* Geese, villain?

*Serv.* *Soldiers, sir.*

*Macb.* Go prick thy face, and over-red thy fear,  
Thou lily-liver'd boy. What soldiers, patch?  
Death of thy soul! those linen cheeks of thine  
Are counsellors to fear. What soldiers, wheyface?

*Serv.* The English force, so please you.

*Macb.* Take thy face hence. [Exit Servant.]

Seyton!—I am sick at heart,  
When I behold—Seyton, I say!—This push  
Will chair me ever, or disseat me now.  
I have lived long enough: my May of life  
Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf;  
And that which should accompany old age,  
As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,  
I must not look to have; but, in their stead,  
Curses, not loud but deep, mouth-honour, breath,  
Which the poor heart would fain deny, and dare not.  
Seyton!

*Enter SEYTON.*

*Sey.* What is your gracious pleasure?

*Macb.* What news more?

*Sey.* All is confirm'd, my lord, which was reported. 31

*Macb.* I'll fight till from my bones my flesh be hack'd.

Give me mine armour.

*Sey.* 'T is not needed yet.

*Macb.* I'll put it on.

Send out moe horses; skirr the country round;

35

Hang those that talk of fear. Give me mine armour.

How does your patient, doctor?

*Doct.* Not so sick, my lord,

As she is troubled with thick-coming fancies,

That keep her from her rest.

*Macb.* Cure her of that.

Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased,

40

Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,

Raze out the written troubles of the brain

And with some sweet oblivious antidote

Cleanse the stuff'd bosom of that perilous stuff

Which weighs upon the heart?

*Doct.* Therein the patient

45

Must minister to himself.

*Macb.* Throw physic to the dogs; I'll none of it.

Come, put mine arnour on; give me my staff.

Seyton, send out. Doctor, the thanes fly from me.

Come, sir, dispatch. If thou couldst, doctor, cast

50

The water of my land, find her disease,

And purge it to a sound and pristine health,

I would applaud thee to the very echo,

That should applaud again.—Pull 't off, I say.—

What rhubarb, senna, or what purgative drug,

55

Would scour these English hence? Hear'st thou of them?

*Doct.* Ay, my good lord; your royal preparation

Makes us hear something.

*Macb.* Bring it after me.

I will not be afraid of death and bane,

Till Birnam forest come to Dunsinane.

60

*Doct. [Aside.]* Were I from Dunsinane away and clear,

Profit again should hardly draw me here.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV. *Country near Birnam wood.*

*Drum and colours.* Enter MALCOLM, old SIWARD and his Son, MACDUFF, MENTEITH, CAITHNESS, ANGUS, LENNOX, ROSS, and Soldiers, marching.

*Mal.* Cousins, I hope the days are near at hand  
That chambers will be safe.

*Ment.* We doubt it nothing.

*Siw.* What wood is this before us?

*Ment.* The wood of Birnam.

*Mal.* Let every soldier hew him down a bough  
And bear't before him: thereby shall we shadow  
The numbers of our host and make discovery  
Err in report of us.

*Soldiers.* It shall be done.

*Siw.* We learn no other but the confident tyrant  
Keeps still in Dunsinane, and will endure  
Our setting down before't.

*Mal.* 'T is his main hope:  
For where there is advantage to be given,  
Both more and less have given him the revolt,  
And none serve with him but constrained things  
Whose hearts are absent too.

*Macd.* Let our just censures  
Attend the true event, and put we on  
Industrious soldiership.

*Siw.* The time approaches  
That will with due decision make us know  
What we shall say we have and what we owe.  
Thoughts speculative their unsure hopes relate,  
But certain issue strokes must arbitrate:

Towards which advance the war. [Exeunt, marching.]

SCENE V. *Dunsinane. Within the castle.*

Enter MACBETH, SEYTON, and Soldiers, with drum  
and colours.

*Macb.* Hang out our banners on the outward walls;  
The cry is still 'They come': our castle's strength  
Will laugh a siege to scorn: here let them lie  
Till famine and the ague eat them up:  
Were they not forced with those that should be ours,  
We might have met them dareful, beard to beard,

And beat them backward home. [A cry of women within.  
What is that noise?

Sey. It is the cry of women, my good lord.

[Exit.

Macb. I have almost forgot the taste of fears:  
The time has been, my senses would have cool'd  
To hear a night-shriek; and my fell of hair  
Would at a dismal treatise rouse and stir  
As life were in't: I have supp'd full with horrors;  
Direnness, familiar to my slaughterous thoughts,  
Cannot once start me.

10

*Re-enter SEYTON.*

Wherefore was that cry?

15

Sey. The queen, my lord, is dead.

Macb. She should have died hereafter;  
There would have been a time for such a word.  
To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,  
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day  
To the last syllable of recorded time,  
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools  
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!  
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player  
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage  
And then is heard no more: it is a tale  
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,  
Signifying nothing.

20

25

*Enter a Messenger.*

Thou comest to use thy tongue; thy story quickly.

Mess. Gracious my lord,  
I should report that which I say I saw,  
But know not how to do it.

30

Macb. Well, say, sir.  
Mess. As I did stand my watch upon the hill,  
I look'd toward Birnam, and anon, methought,  
The wood began to move.

Macb. Liar and slave!  
Mess. Let me endure your wrath, if't be not so:  
Within this three mile may you see it coming;  
I say, a moving grove.

35

Macb. If thou speak'st false,  
Upon the next tree shalt thou hang alive,  
Till famine cling thee: if thy speech be sooth,  
I care not if thou dost for me as much.

40

I pull in resolution, and begin  
 To doubt the equivocation of the fiend  
 That lies like truth: 'Fear not, till Birnam wood  
 Do come to Dunsinane': and now a wood  
 Comes toward Dunsinane. Arm, arm, and out!  
 If this which he avouches does appear,  
 There is nor flying hence nor tarrying here.  
 I gin to be aweary of the sun,  
 And wish the estate o' the world were now undone.  
 Ring the alarum-bell! Blow, wind! come, wrack!  
 At least we'll die with harness on our back.

45

50

[Exeunt.]

SCENE VI. *Dunsinane. Before the castle.*

*Drum and colours. Enter MALCOLM, old SIWARD,  
 MACDUFF, and their Army, with boughs.*

*Mal.* Now near enough: your leavy screens throw down,  
 And show like those you are. You, worthy uncle,  
 Shall, with my cousin, your right-noble son,  
 Lead our first battle: worthy Macduff and we  
 Shall take upon's what else remains to do,  
 According to our order.

5

*Siw.* Fare you well.  
 Do we but find the tyrant's power to-night,  
 Let us be beaten, if we cannot fight.

*Macd.* Make all our trumpets speak; give them all breath,  
 Those clamorous harbingers of blood and death. [Exeunt.]

SCENE VII. *Another part of the field.*

*Alarums. Enter MACBETH.*

*Macb.* They have tied me to a stake; I cannot fly,  
 But, bear-like, I must fight the course. What's he  
 That was not born of woman? Such a one  
 Am I to fear, or none.

*Enter young SIWARD.*

*Yo. Siw.* What is thy name?

*Macb.* Thou 'lt be afraid to hear it.

*Yo. Siw.* No; though thou call'st thyself a hotter name 6  
 Than any is in hell.

*Macb.* My name's Macbeth.

*Yo. Siw.* The devil himself could not pronounce a title  
 More hateful to mine ear.

*Macb.*

No, nor more fearful.

*Yo. Siw.* Thou liest, abhorred tyrant; with my sword 10  
I 'll prove the lie thou speak'st.

[*They fight, and young Siward is slain.*

*Macb.*

Thou wast born of woman.

But swords I smile at, weapons laugh to scorn,  
Brandish'd by man that's of a woman born.

[*Exit.*

*Alarums. Enter MACDUFF.*

*Macd.* That way the noise is. Tyrant, show thy face!  
If thou be'st slain and with no stroke of mine, 15  
My wife and children's ghosts will haunt me still.  
I cannot strike at wretched kerns, whose arms  
Are hired to bear their staves: either thou, Macbeth,  
Or else my sword with an unbatter'd edge  
I sheathe again undeeded. There thou shouldst be; 20  
By this great clatter, one of greatest note  
Seems bruited. Let me find him, fortune!  
And more I beg not.

[*Exit Alarums.*

*Enter MALCOLM and old SIWARD.*

*Siw.* This way, my lord; the castle's gently render'd:  
The tyrant's people on both sides do fight; 25  
The noble thanes do bravely in the war;  
The day almost itself professes yours,  
And little is to do.

*Mal.* We have met with foes  
That strike beside us.

*Siw.* Enter, sir, the castle.

[*Exeunt alarums.*

### SCENE VIII. *Another part of the field.*

*Enter MACBETH.*

*Macb.* Why should I play the Roman fool, and die  
On mine own sword? whilst I see lives, the gashes  
Do better upon them.

*Enter MACDUFF.*

*Macd.* Turn, hell-hound, turn!

*Macb.* Of all men else I have avoided thee:  
But get thee back; my soul is too much charged 5  
With blood of thine already.

*Macd.* I have no words:  
My voice is in my sword: thou bloodier villain

Than terms can give thee out!

[They fight.]

*Macb.* Thou losest labour:  
As easy mayst thou the intrenchant air  
With thy keen sword impress as make me bleed:  
Let fall thy blade on vulnerable crests;  
I bear a charmed life, which must not yield  
To one of woman born.

*Macd.* Despair thy charm;  
And let the angel whom thou still hast served  
Tell thee, Macduff was from his mother's womb  
Untimely ripp'd.

*Macb.* Accursed be that tongue that tells me so,  
For it hath cow'd my better part of man!  
And be these juggling fiends no more believed,  
That palter with us in a double sense;  
That keep the word of promise to our ear,  
And break it to our hope. I'll not fight with thee.

*Macd.* Then yield thee, coward,  
And live to be the show and gaze o' the time:  
We'll have thee, as our rarer monsters are,  
Painted upon a pole, and underwrit,  
'Here may you see the tyrant'.

*Macb.* I will not yield,  
To kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet,  
And to be baited with the rabble's curse.  
Though Birnam wood be come to Dunsinane,  
And thou opposed, being of no woman born,  
Yet I will try the last. Before my body  
I throw my warlike shield. Lay on, Macduff,  
And damn'd be him that first cries 'Hold, enough!'

[*Exeunt, fighting. Alarums.*

*Retreat. Flourish. Enter, with drum and colours, MALCOLM, old SIWARD, ROSS, the other Thanes, and Soldiers.*

*Mal.* I would the friends we miss were safe arrived.

35

*Siw.* Some must go off: and yet, by these I see,  
So great a day as this is cheaply bought.

*Mal.* Macduff is missing, and your noble son.

*Ross.* Your son, my lord, has paid a soldier's debt:  
He only lived but till he was a man;

40

The which no sooner had his prowess confirm'd  
In the unshrinking station where he fought,  
But like a man he died.

*Siw.*

Then he is dead?

*Ross.* Ay, and brought off the field: your cause of sorrow  
Must not be measured by his worth, for then 45  
It hath no end.

*Siw.*

Had he his hurts before?

*Ross.* Ay, on the front.*Siw.*

Why then, God's soldier be he!

Had I as many sons as I have hairs,  
I would not wish them to a fairer death:  
And so, his knell is knoll'd.

*Mal.*

He's worth more sorrow, 50

And that I'll spend for him.

*Siw.*

He's worth no more:

They say he parted well, and paid his score:  
And so, God be with him! Here comes newer comfort.

*Re-enter MACDUFF, with MACBETH'S head.*

*Macd.* Hail, king! for so thou art: behold, where stands  
The usurper's cursed head: the time is free: 55  
I see thee compass'd with thy kingdom's pearl,  
That speak my salutation in their minds;  
Whose voices I desire aloud with mine:  
Hail, King of Scotland!

*All.*

Hail, King of Scotland! [Flourish.

*Mal.* We shall not spend a large expense of time 60  
Before we reckon with your several loves,  
And make us even with you. My thanes and kinsmen,  
Henceforth be earls, the first that ever Scotland  
In such an honour named. What's more to do,  
Which would be planted newly with the time, 65  
As calling home our exiled friends abroad  
That fled the snares of watchful tyranny;  
Producing forth the cruel ministers  
Of this dead butcher and his fiend-like queen,  
Who, as 't is thought, by self and violent hands 70  
Took off her life; this, and what needful else  
That calls upon us, by the grace of Grace,  
We will perform in measure, time and place:  
So, thanks to all at once and to each one,  
Whom we invite to see us crown'd at Scone.

75  
[Flourish. Exeunt.

## NOTES.

### Act I.—Scene I.

*Time—Morning.*

The First Act has for its theme *The Temptation*. The first short scene with the witches gives a hint of the evil influences that will pervade the whole play. The second scene introduces us to the events which lead up to the main story, and in the third scene we find ourselves in the full current of the play. The third and the seventh are the most important scenes in this Act. In the third the Temptation definitely presents itself to Macbeth, and the readiness with which he yields to it should be noticed. In the seventh he is half inclined to draw back, but at the taunts of his wife he finally chooses the evil course, and as the Act closes his words show that the Temptation is complete.

8. **hurly-burly**, a great tumult: the word was originally *hurly*, the 'burly' being only a modified repetition of the first part. Here it refers to the rebellion which was then throwing Scotland into confusion.
4. **the battle**, which Macbeth was then fighting with the rebels.
8. **Graymalkin**, a gray cat.
9. **Paddock**, a toad.  
Witches were supposed to have familiar spirits attending them in the form of animals, especially cats and toads.
10. **Anon**, at once.
11. The witches have chosen evil for their good, and what others regard as good is to them evil. Notice that Macbeth's first words (l. 3. 38) are an echo of this line.

### Act I.—Scene 2.

*Time—Same day as Scene 1.*

This scene has probably not been left as Shakespeare wrote it. Some lines are too short; some sentences are not complete, and there are points in the story that do not agree with later scenes. It looks as if the play had been cut down for stage purposes.

3. **sergeant**, the stage-direction calls him a captain.
- 6, 7. Tell the king what you know of the state of the fight when you left it.
8. **spent**, exhausted.
9. **choke their art**, hinder one another from using their powers of swimming.
- 10-12. He has so many evil qualities that he is just the man one would expect to turn out a rebel.
10. **to that, to that end**, i.e. to make him a rebel.

18. **Of**, with.  
**kerns**, light-armed soldiers.  
**gallowglasses**, heavy-armed soldiers.  
Holinshed mentions kerns and gallowglasses in the passage on which this scene is based.
15. **all's too weak**, all *was* too weak; with all their efforts they could not overcome Macbeth; 's for *was* is very unusual.
18. The hot blood on his sword sent up vapour like steam.
19. **minion**, favourite (Fr. *mignon*, a favourite).
21. **Which**, often used in Elizabethan times for *who*. As the text stands the antecedent to *which* is *slave*, i.e. Macdonwald. But it would make much better sense if the *which* referred to Macbeth. Some lines have most likely been cut out here. Taking it in this way the

meaning is that Macbeth slew the rebel without holding any parley with him.

24. cousin. Duncan and Macbeth were both grandsons of Malcolm II.

25. 'gins, begins.

25-28. As violent storms sometimes come from the east, which we usually associate with the gladness of sunrise, so trouble sometimes follows upon the very events which have brought us success and gladness. The application of this remark is that no sooner had Macbeth defeated the rebels than he had to face the forces of the Norwegian king.

30. skipping, a word suggestive of the quick movements of the light-armed foot-soldiers.

31. Norwegian, Norwegian. Sweno, king of Norway, was helping the rebels.

surveying vantage, seeing his opportunity. *Vantage*, a shortened form of *advantage*. (The *d* has got into this word by a mistake: it comes from the Lat. *ab*, *ante*, from before, through the French *avant*, with the suffix *-age*, and was spelt *avantage* in English till about 1400.)

32. furbish'd, polished, not yet dimmed with fighting.

34. Yes, said ironically; 'as much as a sparrow dismays an eagle'.

36. sooth, truth. (A.S. *soth* truth.)

37. He means 'cannons filled with double charges', but puts the effect—cracks (*reports*)—for the cause. As Macbeth lived and died before the Norman Conquest, and cannons only came into use some three hundred years later, the mention of them here is out of place. Such a misplacing of things in point of time is called an *anachronism*.

40. memorize, make memorable.

Golgotha, "that is to say, The

place of a skull" (*S. Matthew*, xxvii. 38); so here the word simply means, 'a place of skulls', 'a battlefield'.

41. He breaks off, almost fainting, and leaves the sentence unfinished.

43. So well, as well.

45. thane, an Anglo-Saxon nobleman lower than an *earl*.

49. flout the sky, flap proudly against the sky; but as the rebellion was crushed, Ross must be describing the state of things before the battle.

flout properly means *to mock* (Dutch, *fluyten*, to play on the flute, to jeer).

50. A vivid way of saying that the Norwegian banners at first, by their number, alarmed Macbeth's soldiers.

54. Bellona's bridegroom, Macbeth. Bellona was a Roman goddess of war.

lapp'd in proof, clad in armour.

55. Faced him and made comparison of their strength in single combat.

56. Point against point rebellious, sword opposing sword.

57. lavish, over full of confidence, insolent.

59. the Norways' king, king of the Norwegians.

craves composition, asks for terms of peace.

60. deign, allow.

61. Saint Coime's inch, the island of Saint Columba, now called Inchcolm, in the Firth of Forth. *Inch*, meaning *island*, is common in Scotch names.

62. dollars were first coined about five hundred years after Macbeth's time, so this is another anachronism. (See note on line 37 of this scene.)

64. Ourbosom interest, those affairs which concern us most nearly. present, immediate.

### Act I.—Scene 3.

*Time*—Afternoon of the same day.

This scene and the seventh are the most important parts of the first Act. They deal with the temptation and yielding of Macbeth.

1. This is the 'meeting again' re-

ferred to in the first line of the play. The witches are allowed to talk for some time before Macbeth appears, to give us some further insight into their rooted love of evil for its own sake.

2. It was an old belief that witches

had a particular spite against swine.

6. *Aoint thee*, away with thee. The derivation of *aoint* is uncertain, but *rynt thee* is said to be still used in Cheshire in telling a cow to get out of the way.

*rump-fed*, fed on the daintiest bits.

*ronyon*, a term of contempt.

7. *Aleppo*, in the north of Syria.

*Tiger*, was a common name for ships in Shakespeare's time.

8. *sieve*; from the old accounts of witches they seem to have been fond of sailing about in sieves.

9. Witches were supposed to be able to assume the form of any animal they pleased, but always under the condition that the animal would be without a tail.

10. *Ratlike*, I will gnaw a hole in his ship, and sink it.

14. *other*, sometimes used as a plural by Elizabethan writers.

15. I have under my control the very ports towards which they blow.

17. *the shipman's card*, the mariner's compass. The compass was known in China before the birth of Christ, but was introduced into Europe only in the twelfth century. Unless the witches can be supposed to have a knowledge of Chinese inventions this must go down as another anachronism. (See note on l. 2 37.)

20. *pent-house lid*, eyelid. The sloping shape of the eyelid is compared to the sloping roof of a pent-house, or shed put up against the wall of another building. (The word was formerly *pentice*, but was ignorantly changed into *pent-house*. It comes from the O. F. *appendis*, an outhouse; Lat. *ad*, to, *pendere*, to hang.)

21. *forbid*, placed under a ban, excommunicated. Notice the shortened form of the past participle: compare i. 4. 8, and see note there.

22. *se'nights*, seven nights, weeks. Compare *fortnight*, for 'fourteen nights'.

23. *peak*, grow thin.

22. The witches now join hands and dance round in a circle nine times, three times for each of them, be-

cause three was regarded as a magic number.

33. *Posters*, swift travellers.

38. The following passage from the second edition of Holinshed's *Chronicles* is that on which lines 38-69 of this scene are based. A comparison of it with the text will give some idea of the way in which Shakespeare used his materials, but he does not everywhere follow his authority so closely as in this scene. Thus there are only a few hints in Holinshed corresponding to the remainder of the scene.

"It fortuned as Makbeth and Banquo lourned towards Forea, where the king then late, they went sporting by the wale together, without other companie, saue onelie themselves, passing thorough the woods and fields, when suddeinlie in the middest of a laund, there met them three women in strange and wild apparell, resembling creatures of elder world, whome when they attentiuely beheld, woonderring much at the sight, the first of them spake and said; All haile Makbeth, thane of Glannmis (for he had latelie entered into that dignite and office by the death of his father Sinell). The second of them said; Haile Makbeth thane of Cawder. But the third said; All haile Makbeth that heereafter shalt be king of Scotland.

Then Banquo; What manner of women (saith he) are you, that seeme so little favourable vnto me, whereas to my fellow heires, besides high offices, ye assigne also the kingdome, appointing forth nothing for me at all? Yes (saith the first of them) we promise greater benefits vnto thee, than vnto him, for he shall reigne in deed, but with an unluckie end: neither shall he leaue anie issue behind him to succeed in his place, where contrarie thou in deed shalt not reigne at all, but of thee those shall be borne which shall govern the Scottish kingdome by long order of continuall descent. Herewith the foresaid women vanished immeiatlie out of their sight."

38. *foul and fair*: Macbeth simply means that it is a day of rapid change from storm to sunshine, but it should be noticed that these

- words echo the last words of the witches in Scene 1. This hints at a certain agreement already existing between their minds and his: he is already pondering evil (see below on line 51); they are wholly devoted to evil.
30. **Forres**, in the N. of Scotland, on the Moray Firth, about twenty-five miles from Inverness. Fife, where Macbeth had been fighting, is more than a hundred miles away. Macbeth must have left Fife soon after Ross started, for he reaches Forres only a few hours later. A desolate-looking heath lies near Forres, and close by the town are the ruins of an old castle which is said to have been used as a residence by Duncan and afterwards by Macbeth.
44. **choppy**, wrinkled, withered; the word strictly means marked with cracks as if chopped.
51. Macbeth starts because the idea of being king is not new to his own mind, but he does not expect to hear it put into words by someone else. Throughout this interview with the witches the contrast between the frank, open, dignified bearing of Banquo and the startled, self-conscious manner of Macbeth should be carefully noted.
53. **fantastical**, imaginary, created by fantasy.
54. **show**, appear, seem.
- 55, 56. **present grace** refers to the witches' "thane of Glamis", a title which Macbeth already possessed. **great prediction** Of noble having refers to their promise of the title "thane of Cawdor".
56. **royal hope** refers to their promise of the kingship.
57. **rapt**, carried away in thought. **withal**, therewith; here used as an adverb. For a different use see i. 5. 28, and note.
- 60, 61. Neither beg your favours nor fear your hate. This speech, with its balanced forms of expression here and in lines 55, 56, is full of fearless dignity.
65. **Lesser**, the double comparative often occurs in Shakespeare.
66. **happy**, in the sense of *fortunate*.
71. **Sinel**, the father of Macbeth, already dead.
73. **A prosperous gentleman**: this does not agree with what Ross says in i. 2. 50-53, where Cawdor is spoken of as having taken a prominent part in the rebellion which Macbeth had just crushed. It is not unlikely that Shakespeare had originally represented Cawdor as having given secret help to the rebels, unknown to Macbeth, and that in the alterations which Act i. Scene 2 seems to have suffered this became obscured.
74. Does not come within the range of what we could ever expect to believe.
76. **owe**, own, possess.
81. **corporal**, having bodily form (Lat. *corpus*, a body).
84. **the insane root**, the root which causes insanity; perhaps the hemlock is meant.
86. Macbeth does not answer Banquo. His words show that he was already brooding over the hindrances to his own enjoyment of the crown.
89. **happily**, with pleasure.
91. **Thy personal venture**, the way you risked your person.
93. **thine** refers to *praises*; **his** to *wonders*.  
His wonder at your valour and the praises which he wishes to bestow upon you struggle in vain to find expression.
96. **afeard**, afraid.  
Macbeth, fighting in the midst of his Norwegian foes, showed no fear of death, while he was dealing death on every side.
99. Reports praising what you had done in the great matter of defending his kingdom.
100. Ross talks, especially in these last few lines, as if he had been with Duncan all the time, instead of being himself the latest messenger from the field of battle. This is probably due to the alterations which seem to have been made in Act i. Scene 2. See note on line 73 of this scene.
104. **earnest**, something given as a pledge of something greater to follow.
106. **addition**, title.
109. **Who**, combines relative and antecedent in one, and = *he who*.

112. **line**, back up, support, as cloth is stiffened by lining.
118. **vantage**, see note on i. 2. 31.
- 111, 116. This uncertainty about Cawdor's share in the rebellion does not remove the difficulties which arise out of the different information that Ross and Macbeth seem to have about him; but it strengthens the suggestion made in the note on line 73 of this scene.
117. **The greatest**, the kingship promised him by the witches.
120. **That**, Banquo is thinking of the prophecy that Macbeth should be king, though it has not been actually mentioned.  
**trusted home**, trusted completely, to the uttermost.
121. **enkindle you**, tempt you to try to win.  
 Notice the marked difference in the effect which this partial confirmation of the prophecy has upon the two men: Banquo, though startled at first, is quite unmoved by evil purposes: Macbeth is full of 'horrible imaginings': the evil seed had fallen upon well-prepared ground.
125. **Win us with honest trifles**, by proving true in some small detail they induce us to follow them to our ruin.  
**betray's**, betray us.  
 If Macbeth was not too busy with his plots to heed these words, they would come back to him with force when the later promises that he received through the witches led him to his destruction, though they were literally true. See v. 8. 19-22.
127. Banquo turns to Ross and Angus.
- 128, 129. A comparison borrowed from the stage.
128. **prologue**, a piece spoken as an introduction to a play. Shakespeare's play of *Henry V.* has a prologue to each act.  
**the swelling act**, the growing glory of his life, from thane to king.
129. **the imperial theme**, the kingship, from which he cannot divert his thoughts.
134. **that suggestion**, to make himself king by murdering Duncan. Notice that he already yields to it.
135. **unfix my hair**, make it stand on end.
136. **seated**, firmly placed.
137. **use**, custom.
- 137, 138. Dangers which actually confront us cause less fear than the evil things that we imagine. This was very true of Macbeth: he was bold enough in battle, but a coward when thinking over his deeds either before or after doing them.
139. **fantastical**, imaginary. The word is used by Banquo in line 53 of this scene.
- 140-142. This mere idea of murder shakes my whole being so that my powers of thought and action are overcome, and nothing seems real but these yet unacted suggestions.
140. **my single state of man**; man is compared to a commonwealth whose singleness (unity, harmony) is disturbed by the intrusion of evil.
141. **surmise**, the 'horrible imaginings' of line 138.
142. **rapt**. See line 57 of this scene.
144. **come**, the past participle, not the present indicative.
- 145, 146. New clothes do not fit us well till we have worn them a little. So Macbeth's new dignity does not yet sit easily on him.
147. The meaning is the same as in the proverb, 'It's a long lane that has no turning'.  
 The singular *runs* may be accounted for by the fact that 'time and the hour' form a single idea.
148. **stay upon**, await.
- 149, 150. Macbeth pretends that his absent-mindedness was due to his trying to remember something he had forgotten.
- 153-156. These last three lines are spoken to Banquo only.
154. The interim having weigh'd it, having thought it over in the meantime.
155. **free** is transferred from *speak to hearts*: 'speak our hearts freely'.

## Act I.—Scene 4.

- Time*—Morning of the next day.
2. **Those in commission**, the officers or commissioners appointed to see to the execution.
3. **spoke, for spoken**. In Elizabethan authors there was a general tendency to drop the termination *en*, so that shortened forms of the past participle are frequent. If the shortened form was liable to be confused with the infinitive the past tense was often used, as *o'er took* for *o'er taken* (iv. i. 142). See also the Appendix.
9. **had been studied**, had made it his study.
10. **the dearest thing he owed**, the most precious thing he possessed.
12. **To find**, by which we can find. The mind's construction, may mean either the *structure* of the mind, *i.e.* the largely permanent formation of the mind which we call *character*; or the temporary purposes which are at any given moment being constructed in the mind.
13. Notice how Duncan's words about Cawdor apply with equal force to Macbeth, who was even a worse traitor than Cawdor. The entrance of Macbeth just as these words are spoken is one of the most dramatic touches in the play.
15. **The sin of my ingratitude**, a rather exaggerated way of speaking of the fact of his not yet having expressed his gratitude.
16. **so far before**, your services are so far beyond what my gratitude can repay.
- 19, 20. That I might have been able to reward you above your deserts rather than so far below them.
22. Duncan's gratitude is full and overflowing; Macbeth's answer is formal and stiff.
23. **pays itself**, is its own reward.
27. **Safe toward**, unwaveringly toward.
- 30, 31. **nor must be known No less**, a double negative in Shakespeare is not equal to an affirmative (as in the Latin *nonnulli*), but to a strengthened negative. We should say "and must be known, &c.". Compare note on iii. 6. 8.
37. **establish our estate**, settle the succession to the throne. In these early times the eldest son of a king did not always succeed to the throne, and Macbeth, being of royal blood, might have hoped to be chosen king on Duncan's death. This action of Duncan's, however, destroyed such a hope, and helped to decide Macbeth in his treacherous purpose.
39. **Prince of Cumberland**, a title corresponding to our English title, "Prince of Wales". Cumberland was at this time held by the Scottish kings as a fief of the English crown.
42. **to Inverness**, about twenty-five miles from Forres. Macbeth's castle was at Inverness.
44. To be resting, instead of working for you, is toilsome.
45. **harbinger**, forerunner: properly, one who provides shelter for a man of rank. (Connected with *harbour*.)
52. Let not the eye see what the hand does.
54. Banquo has been privately praising Macbeth's bravery in battle to Duncan.

## Act I.—Scene 5.

- Time*—The same day.
2. **by the perfectest report**, by the most convincing evidence, viz., the fact that part of what they foretold had already come true.
5. **Whiles**, while. Shakespeare uses both words in the same sense. *rapt*, see note on i. 8. 57.
6. **missives** here means 'messengers': usually (though not in Shakespeare) it means 'letters'.
9. **deliver thee, report to thee**.
18. Notice that in Lady Macbeth's speech, full as it is of fixed determination to do evil, there is no word that suggests that she desires

the crown for herself; she is thinking only of her husband, and the very account she gives of his character, far surpassing what he deserves, shows how she is devoted to him.

18. **The illness should,** the evil which should.

20-23. It is difficult to make good sense out of these lines; the text is probably corrupt. The meaning may perhaps be expressed thus: You need some one to say to you, "Thus must thou do (kill Duncan) if you wish to have the crown"; and this killing of Duncan is a thing which you are afraid to do rather than a thing which you wish not to be done.

23. **Hie thee,** hasten. See iii. 1. 35.

25. **chastise.** The accent is on the first syllable.

26. **the golden round,** the crown.

27. **metaphysical,** supernatural.  
doth, another singular verb with two subjects. Compare i. 3. 147.

28. **withal,** a form of the preposition *with* used when it comes after the word it governs: the prose order would be, "With which fate . . . doth seem". Compare i. 3. 57.

**tidings,** properly plural, but sometimes used, like *news*, as a singular.

29. The servant's message follows so strangely upon Lady Macbeth's thoughts that she is betrayed into a violent expression of surprise, but to avert the suspicions which her exclamation might arouse, she tries to account for it in the next two lines.

33. **had the speed of him,** travelled more speedily than he (Macbeth) did.

39. **mortal,** deadly, murderous. So Milton at the beginning of *Para-*

*dise Lost* speaks of the 'mortal taste' of the tree forbidden to Adam and Eve, meaning the tasting that brought death with it.

42. **remorse** does not here mean regret for the deed when done, but relenting from the idea of it beforehand.

43. **compunctions** visitings of nature, natural feelings of pity.

44. **fell,** cruel.

44, 45. **keep peace between** The effect and it, prevent the murder by putting a barrier between my purpose and the carrying out of it.

47. **sightless,** invisible.

48. **wait on nature's** mischief, are ready to help on the evil promptings of our nature.

49. **pall thee,** wrap thyself.  
dunkest, darkest.

50. This looks as if Lady Macbeth was thinking of murdering Duncan with her own hand. Compare lines 65, 66 of this scene, and i. 7. 62.

53. **by the all-hail hereafter,** by the title of king promised to you.

56. **the instant,** the present.

60-64. Lady Macbeth has much more power than her husband of hiding her feelings behind a pleasant face. She has to urge him to the same thing when he is plotting the murder of Banquo. (See iii. 2. 26-28).

61, 62. To deceive those who are about you, look as bright and cheerful as a man should who is entertaining a royal guest.

65. **Must be provided for,** an innocent phrase containing a guilty meaning.

70. If you change countenance people will see that you are afraid of something.

### Act I.—Scene 6.

**Time—Afternoon of the same day as Scenes 4 and 5.**

The opening words of this scene are full of the sweet, peaceful air of the country, and, by suggesting the general feeling of repose and trustfulness which seemed to surround the castle, add to the horror

of the treachery that was being planned.

8. **gentle:** the adjective properly belongs to the noun *air*, but is transferred to another word as is frequent in Shakespeare.

4. **martlet,** martin.  
approve, prove.

5. **mansionry**, house building.  
 6. **Jutty**, projecting point: the same word as *jetty*. (Old Fr. *jette*, a throw, from *jetter*, to throw.)  
**frieze**, a term in architecture meaning a part of the building over the columns, often ornamented with projecting work.  
 7. **coign of vantage**, corner offering an opportunity for building.  
 8. **pendent**, hanging.  
**procreant cradle**, nest where she rears her young.  
 10. Macbeth cannot trust himself to meet Duncan yet, so his wife receives the king.  
 11. **sometime**, sometimes. Both words are used by Shakespeare with the same meaning.  
 11-14. Duncan means that while the very affection of his subjects sometimes troubles him, yet he always welcomes it, because it is affection. Now he is showing his affection for his subjects by visiting them; but in so doing he gives them trouble.

Still he hopes that they too will regard this trouble as a proof of his affection, and will therefore ask God to reward him for giving them this trouble.

13. **'Iid**, a corruption of 'yield', in the sense of 'reward'. (A.S. *gieldan*, to pay).  
 16. **single**, contrasted with the 'double' of the previous line.  
 16, 17. **to contend Against**, match itself with.  
 20. **hermits**, in the sense that they would always feel bound to pray for him.  
 21. **coursed**, chased.  
 22. **purveyor**, provider: to have out-ridden him so as to prepare for his arrival.  
 23. **holp**, an old form of the particle 'helped'. (The A. S. verb *helpan* was strong: the modern verb is weak.)  
 26. **compt**, account.  
 31. Duncan takes Lady Macbeth's hand and leads her into the castle.

### Act I.—Scene 7.

**Time**—Evening of the same day.

**Sewer**, an upper servant who directed the laying of a dinner. It formerly meant one who tasted the food to prove that there was no poison in it. (M.E. *sewen*, to set meat: it has no connection with sewer, a drain, which is a French word.)

1-12. This is a passage of some difficulty. The general meaning is that Macbeth is not troubled by thoughts of the next world, but is afraid because evil deeds often bring their own reward in this world.

In more detail: If all the difficulties were overcome when Duncan is murdered, then the sooner he is murdered the better (lines 1, 2). If the murderer could bring all the consequences along with it at once, and with Duncan's death win success (2-4), so that one blow of the dagger should rid him of any further trouble in this world, then Macbeth would risk the judgment of the next world (4-7). But what troubled him was that judgment often falls upon evil-doers here;

and that evil deeds have an ugly habit of recoiling upon the heads of those who do them in this world, without waiting for the next (7-12).

3. **trammel up**, catch up as in a net. (Fr. *tramaill*, a net for partridges: Lat. *tri*, threefold, *macula*, a net.)  
 4. **With his surcease**, with the death of Duncan. (*surcease* properly means 'delay', 'stoppage'; it has no connection with *cease*, but comes from the Old Fr. *sursis*, pp. of *surseoir*, to delay; Lat. *supercedere*.)  
 6. **But here**, only here, in this world.  
**this bank and shoal of time**: eternity is compared to a vast ocean, and time to a sandbank rising out of it.  
 7. **Jump, jump over, ignore.**  
 8. **still, always.**  
**here, in this life.**  
**that, so that.**  
 11. **Commends**, offers, commits.  
**chalice, cup.**  
 17. **borne his faculties**, fulfilled the duties of his office.  
**meek**, the adj. used for the adverb, *meekly*.

18. clear, free from suspicion of wrong-doing.
20. his taking-off: Macbeth avoids the ugly word 'murder', just as his wife does in i. 5. 65, 66.
- 21-25. Pity is compared to a 'naked new-born babe' because of its gentle tenderness; but this comparison is at once dropped, and not resumed. 'Striding the blast', of course, refers to 'pity', not to 'babe'. The sense then is: 'When it is known that Duncan has been murdered, pity, which in its tenderness is like a new-born babe, and like heaven's cherubin in its power of swift movement, will sweep through the land as if carried upon a mighty wind, bringing tears to every eye.'
23. sightless, invisible: used in the same sense in i. 5. 47.
- 25-28. There are two distinct metaphors here; the first of a rider urging on an unwilling horse with the spur; the second of a man trying to mount a horse in haste and so leaping over it instead of on to it. 'I have nothing with which to urge myself on to this deed as a horse is urged on by the spur; I have only ambition, which often overreaches itself, like a man who, in trying to mount a horse, leaps over it instead.'
29. He, Duncan.
- 31-35. Macbeth is unwilling to put his plot into execution, not because he feels ashamed of its ingratitude and treachery, but because people might say unpleasant things about him.
34. would, we should say 'should'. He compares the 'golden opinions' to a new dress which he is anxious to wear. This suggests the first words of Lady Macbeth's reply.
- 35, 36. the hope... Wherin you dress'd yourself, the hope which you put on like a garment, in which you were entirely wrapped up. But there is another mixture of metaphors here, for a garment cannot be said to get drunk. His hope is first compared to a drunken man, then to a garment, and then the former comparison is resumed.
37. green and pale, referring to the miserable appearance of a man waking out of a drunken sleep.
38. what it did so freely, the thoughts of coming glory and power in which Macbeth had indulged.
39. Such, no more fixed and constant than the hopes which were so strong but have now become so 'green and pale'. afraid, afraid, as in i. 3. 96.
42. the ornament of life, the crown. The meaning is, 'Are you longing to be king, and yet too much of a coward to strike the blow which will make you king?'
45. the adage, the proverb to which Lady Macbeth refers is found in Heywood's *Proverbs*, published in 1562: "The cat would eate fyse, and would not wet her feete". Prithee, I pray thee.
47. beast, as contrasted with 'man' in the previous line.
52. Did then adhere, offered themselves in connection with your purpose. would make, wished to make.
53. that their fitness, that very fitness of theirs.
59. Macbeth is beginning to give way: this is quite a different tone from that of his last speech.
60. But, only. The idea underlying Lady Macbeth's expression is that of the screwing up of the strings of a musical instrument, such as a violin, to the required pitch.
64. wassail, properly a salutation, "Be of health", used in drinking a person's health. (A.S. *waes hael*.) Hence it came to mean drinking, revelry, as here. convince, overcome, a literal rendering of the Lat. *convincere*.
- 65-67. It was an old idea that the brain was divided into three chambers, in one of which the memory was placed. As this was supposed to be at the back, it might be compared to a guard-room, protecting the rest of the brain as long as it was safe. Drink, however, might overcome memory, and convert it into a mere fume, which would fill the other chambers as vapours fill a distilling vessel.
68. receipt, receptacle.
67. A limbeck, a corruption of alembic, a vessel for distilling (Arabic *al*, the; *anbik*, a still).

69. **you and I**, another suggestion that Lady Macbeth thought of murdering Duncan with her own hand. Compare i. 5. 50, and ii. 2. 14.
70. **put upon**, what suspicions can we not throw upon.
71. **spongy**, filled with drink.
72. **quell**, killing, murder. (A.S. *cweallan*, to kill.)
73. **mettle** is the same word as *metal*, and in Shakespeare's time no distinction was made between the

words. Since then *metal* has been confined to the literal sense, and *mettle* to the transferred sense of 'courage', 'spirit'.

74-77. Macbeth's scruples are all removed now that he thinks there is no fear of being found out.

77. **other, otherwise**.

78. **As**, seeing that.

79, 80. **bend up** Each corporal agent, summon all the powers of my body: the underlying idea is that of stringing a bow.

### Act II.—Scene I.

**Time**—Immediately following the last scene: a little after midnight.

The theme of the Second Act is the murder of Duncan. The strained excitement reaches its highest pitch in the second scene, where Macbeth is, for the moment, filled with dread at the deed he has done. The drunken humour of the porter, all unconscious of what has been done, makes us feel the horror of the previous scene by force of contrast. But at the close evil is triumphant; Macbeth has gained the crown.

The first three scenes of this Act might, with advantage, be made into one: at any rate it must be clearly understood that there is no break in time, or change of place between them.

2. **clock**: the earliest clocks probably had no dials, but indicated time by striking only. It is hardly likely that Macbeth had one in his castle, but they began to be introduced into monasteries soon after this time.

4. **husbandry, economy**.

5. **Take thee that too**. Banquo hands to Fleance his dagger, sword-belt, or some other article. It must always be remembered that Shakespeare intended his plays for the stage, not for reading, and some points, therefore, need to be accompanied by action to make their meaning clear.

7-9. Evil influences seem to be pervading the air, but Banquo, unlike Macbeth, resists them.

14. **largess**, a liberal gift. (Fr. *largesse*, bounty: Lat. *laurus*, large, liberal.)

14. **offices**, the servants' quarters.

15. **withal, with**: see note on i. 5. 28.

16, 17. **and shut up in measureless content**: the text is probably corrupt. We may suppose it to have meant that Duncan concluded his message with measureless content, or that he shut himself up in his room in that frame of mind.

17-19. As we were not prepared for Duncan's visit our wishes to provide a worthy reception for him could not be fully carried out, but had to submit to the necessity of offering him imperfect hospitality.

19. **Which**, the antecedent is 'will'.

All's well, you have provided a worthy reception.

22. **entreat an hour to serve**, prevail upon an hour to put itself at our disposal; a roundabout way of saying 'find a little spare time'.

25. If you consent to join in my plans when the time comes.

28. **franchised**, free from anything disloyal to the king.

29. I shall be counsell'd, I will follow your suggestion, to act with you.

31, 32. The bell was to be a signal to Macbeth that the guards of Duncan's chamber were overcome with the drugged wine; but he wished the servant to suppose that it was a sign that his night-draught was ready.

31. **my drink**: it was customary at the time for the rich to drink a cup of spiced wine before going to bed. In an early chapter of Scott's *Ivanhoe* Rowena has this draught offered to her.

26. **sensible**, capable of being perceived by the sense (of feeling).
40. **palpable**, able to be felt, i.e. it looked as if it could be felt just as much as the real dagger he drew.
- 44, 45. Either my eyes are deceived while the other senses are not, or else they are able to perceive something which the others are incapable of grasping.
46. **dudgeon**, handle.
- gouts, drops. (Fr. *goutte*; Lat. *gutta*, both meaning a drop.)
47. Notice how, by an effort of will, Macbeth banishes the illusion: he has less command of himself when he thinks that he sees the ghost of Banquo (iii. 4. 40-107).
50. **abuse**, deceive: the noun is used in a similar sense in iii. 4. 142.
- 51, 52. Witches are now making their offerings with due ceremony to Hecate.
52. **Hecate**, in classical mythology a goddess of the lower world; popularly regarded as queen of the witches.  
Hecate appears as a speaking character in iii. 5. and iv. 1. 38-40, and is mentioned in the stage-direction after iv. 1. 129. It is most likely that these passages have been put into Shakespeare's play by another hand, probably by Middleton. The mention of Hecate in this line may have suggested the dragging of her in in the other scenes.
52. **wither'd murder**, personifying murder as a lean and shrunken villain.
53. To whom the wolf acts as a sen-
- tinel and gives the alarm. (*Alarmed* is the same word as *alarmed*.)
54. whose howl 's his watch, who marks the watches of the night by howls.
56. my steps, which way they walk, instead of 'which way my steps walk'. Shakespeare often makes a noun or pronoun the direct object of the verb when we should put a subordinate sentence. He then uses the subordinate sentence merely to explain the object. So in the *Merchant of Venice* (iv. 1. 167) we find, "You hear the learn'd Bellario, what he writes". for 'You hear what the learn'd Bellario writes'. Such an over-abundance of words is called a *pleonasm*.
57. the very stones prate, by making a noise as I walk over them. It has been suggested that there is a reference to Luke, xix. 40, but it is rather unlikely. Prate=talk: prattle is derived from it.
58. The complete silence suits the horror of the night; any kind of noise would lessen it.
59. **Whiles**: see note on i. 5. 5.
60. When a man talks overmuch about his intentions he is not so likely to carry them into action: a fact of which Macbeth might well have reminded himself on other occasions.  
gives, has a plural subject: see note on ii. 8. 75.
- 61-63. Lady Macbeth now rings the bell as before arranged (see note on lines 31, 32 of this scene). Macbeth compares it to the 'passing bell' rung when a person is dying.

## Act II.—Scene 2.

*Time*—Immediately following upon Scene i.: early morning.

1. Lady Macbeth has been drinking wine to stimulate her for the night's work.
2. **quench'd**, stupefied, for the wine she had given to the guards was drugged.
3. **the fatal bellman**: many passages in old writers show that the owl has from very early times been regarded as a bird of evil omen. Here he is likened to a man ring-

ing the bell on the night before a condemned person was put to death.

5. **grooms, servants**.
6. **mock their charge**, show by their snoring their uselessness as watchers.  
possets, a hot draught, generally taken at night, made of milk, ale, sugar, biscuits, eggs, &c.
7. That, so that.
9. Macbeth is on his way downstairs after murdering Duncan. He thinks

he hears someone speak in the courtyard, and in his excited state rushes on to a balcony and shouts out. But he sees only his wife, so turns back and comes on downstairs to her.

11, 12. **The attempt and not the deed** Confounds us: if we attempt to murder Duncan and do not succeed we shall be ruined.

13, 14. Although Lady Macbeth had called up all her power of will to sustain her in her cruel purpose she has not succeeded in crushing down all womanly feeling, as these words prove.

23. one did laugh . . . one cried. Malcolm and Donalbain, Duncan's sons, sleeping in a room next to that in which their father lay.

28. As, as if.

hangman's, executioner's. In the *Merchant of Venice* (iv. 1. 125) 'the hangman's axe' is spoken of.

29. Listening: as the preposition 'to' is omitted, *listening* is a transitive verb.

33. thought, we should say 'thought of'.

34. so, if we do think of them so.

37. sleeve: not the same word as *sleeve*, the arm of a coat, &c.: it means loose silk, or floss silk, as it is often called: so that the *ravelled sleeve* is 'tangled, loose silk'.

39. great nature's second course: our active, waking hours are spoken of as one *course*, or division of life; the time of sleep is the second division: *course* is used in the sense of *race, journey*. The idea of a second course at a meal might be suggested by the words, 'Chief nourisher in life's feast'; but it should be noted that up to this point all the metaphors are absolutely distinct from one another; and I cannot find any authority for the statement that the second course was the 'chief nourisher' in Elizabethan banquets.

42. This repetition of his titles recalls the meeting with the witches on the heath (i. 3. 48).

44. For a moment Lady Macbeth is

carried away by the frenzied excitement of her husband; but in a moment she regains command of herself.

45. unbend your noble strength, perhaps this is meant to be contrasted with Macbeth's words in i. 7. 79, 80.

46. brainsickly, madly.

47. this filthy witness, this blood which gives evidence of what you have done: the word 'witness' is used to mean (1) one who sees anything take place, (2) one who having seen it gives an account of it before some authority. It is used in the latter sense here, but applied to a thing instead of to a person.

53-55. People asleep or dead are as motionless and as harmless as people in pictures; and it is only children that are afraid of horrible pictures.

56, 57. gild, guilt: the fact that Lady Macbeth could make a pun in such circumstances shows how completely she had for the time steeled herself to all feeling.

58. withal, see note on i. 5. 31.

57. It was Macduff and Lennox who were knocking at the castle gate: see the next scene.

62. multitudinous may refer to the numberless waves of the sea.

incarnadine, make red.

63. Turning the green colour of the waves into a universal red.

66. retire we, let us retire.

68, 69. The constancy(bravery) which used to attend you has forsaken you.

70. nightgown, what we should call a dressing-gown.

lest occasion call us, lest the discovery of the murder or some other reason should make it necessary for us to come out of our room, in which case we must not appear dressed as in the daytime.

72. So poorly, in such an unworthy, cowardly way.

73. It would be better for me to lose all consciousness than to have to realize fully what I have done.

## Act II.—Scene 3.

*Time.*—Immediately following the last scene: morning.

Some writers have supposed that the early part of this scene was not written by Shakespeare, but they have missed the real purpose of it. It is meant to remind us that the outside world, knowing nothing of the murder, was going on just as it did before. The porter of the castle has had his full share in the general feasting, and in his rough drunken humour pretends that he is porter at the gate of hell. After the high-strained excitement of the last scene we are brought back with a rough shake to the everyday world, and the contrast helps us to realize the horror of Macbeth's crime.

2. **old**, a slang word here, with no very definite meaning: 'plenty of turning' is something like what is meant. Compare the expression 'a high old time'.
- 4, 5. **a farmer.. plenty**. When an unusually plentiful harvest is expected, the price of corn goes down, and so the farmers suffer. This actually happened in 1606, and the line may be meant to allude to this fact. If so, it helps to fix the date of the play. (See Introduction, section 1.)
5. **come in time**. You've come in time.
- napkins**, handkerchiefs.  
    enow, still used in some parts of the eastern counties for *enough* before a word beginning with a consonant.
8. **an equivocator**, one who purposely makes misleading statements. In 1606 a Jesuit, who was being tried for taking part in the Gunpowder Plot, publicly declared that he considered equivocation a lawful thing. Shakespeare is perhaps referring to this, and if so we have another indication of the date of the play. The words "who committed treason enough" make it still more likely that he was thinking of this trial.
10. **equivocate to heaven**, get to heaven by equivocation.
18. **stealing out of a French hose**. Some French hose (i.e. knicker-bockers) were rather large and baggy, and it was a common charge against tailors that they used to cut pieces out of them before selling them.
14. **roast your goose**: the long iron which tailors use is called a goose, perhaps because its handle looked like the neck of a goose.
22. The revelry was kept up till three o'clock in the morning. In Romeo and Juliet (iv. 4. 8.) are the lines:  
    "The second cock hath crowed,  
    The curfew bell hath rung, 't is  
    three o'clock".
25. **Good morrow**: *morn* and *morrow* both come from the Middle English *mōrwen*. Compare the Scotch phrase, *the morn's morn*=to-morrow morning.
27. **timely**, early, in good time.
28. **slipp'd**, let slip, let the hour go by.
29. **this**, entertaining the king at such short notice.
31. **physics pain**: when we take pleasure in any task it is no longer troublesome; the trouble is cured by the pleasure.
33. **limited**, appointed. Shakespeare uses the word in this sense in several passages.
38. Voices were heard foretelling terrible events.  
    prophesying is here the gerund or verbal noun.
39. **combustion**, the blazing up of riot, social disturbances.
40. **the obscure bird**, the owl. See ll. 2, 8, and 16. It is called *obscure* because it is a bird of the night. Notice the accent, which is on the first syllable.
42. **Was feverous**: an ague fever caused fits of shaking and shivering: the shaking of the ground in an earthquake might be compared to this.
43. **parallel**. The idea of this word is repeated in 'fellow'.
- 45, 46. Macduff in his excitement uses too many negatives: in ordinary language we should say, 'Neither tongue nor heart can conceive or name thee'.
47. **Confusion, destruction.**

47. made his masterpiece, done the most notable deed he will ever succeed in doing.

48–50. Duncan is compared to a temple which has been broken into and ransacked of its treasures. There is a reference to 2 Cor. vi. 16, "For ye are the temple of the living God". At the same time the words 'murder' and 'life' show that the simple statement of fact is not wholly merged in the metaphor, and this leads to a slight confusion. 'The Lord's anointed' is a phrase used of King Saul in 1 Sam. xxiv. 10.

48, 49. broke..stole. See note on i. 4. 3.

48. ope, a similarly shortened form of the adjective open.

52, 53. destroy your sight With a new Gorgon. The Gorgons were three sisters so dreadful in appearance that anyone who looked on them was turned to stone. Perseus succeeded in slaying one of them, and, having cut off her head, turned his enemies into stone by making them look at it. Shakespeare had probably read the account of the Gorgon's head in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, vv. 180–210.

55. alarmum-bell, alarm-bell. Compare ii. 1. 53.

59. The great doom's image, a sight as terrible as the Last Judgment.

60. sprites, spirits. (Fr. *esprit*: Lat. *spiritus*.)

63. The bell now ringing violently is compared by Lady Macbeth to the trumpet which in war sounds for a conference (parley).

74. mortality, our mortal life.

75. Notice the singular verb with two subjects; and in line 77 with one plural subject. Elizabethan writers did not observe the rules of syntax so strictly as we do to day. Compare i. 3. 147 and i. 5. 27.

76, 77. Life is henceforth like a cellar from which the wine has been drawn and only the dregs left.

76. lees, the dregs of wine.

83. badged, marked as with a badge.

92, 93. My affection for Duncan made me act more harshly than reason would have allowed.

98. Outrun: this form is now usu-

ally kept for the past participle: we should say 'outran'.

98. the pauser, reason: reason which stops men from acting hastily.

94. laced, streaked.

98. breech'd, covered as with breeches.

100. It must be remembered that Lady Macbeth had, a little while before, looked at Duncan's bleeding form. (See ii. 2. 50–57, 64, and v. 1. 43, 44.) To hear her husband now describing the awful sight in minutest detail is more than even her iron will can bear, and she faints.

102. argument, subject for discussion.

103, 104. our fate, Hid in an auger-hole: he means that the treachery from which his father has suffered may yet attack them, and may come from a quarter as likely to be overlooked as an auger-hole.

106, 107. It is too soon for our sorrow to make movement towards revenge.

107. Macbeth takes no notice of his wife; he is too much absorbed in his own position to care for her fainting; compare the way in which he receives the news of her death (v. 5. 17, sq.).

108. naked frailties, half-clothed bodies, for they had rushed out in haste at the ringing of the bell.

113. pretence, purpose, intention. In ii. 4. 24 pretend is used for intend, purpose.

115. mainly readiness, our clothing: 'ready' is sometimes used to mean 'dressed' by Shakespeare.

117. Malcolm feels that any or all of these men may be guilty of the murder of his father.

119. easy, for the adverb easily.

122. There's daggers: see note on line 75 of this scene.

near, used in the sense of nearer. The form *near* is properly the comparative of *nigh*, so that *nearer* is a double comparative.

He who is nearest to us in relationship is the most likely to seek our blood. Macbeth was Duncan's cousin. Donalbain expresses more definite suspicions than Malcolm.

128, 124. This murderous attack upon

our father is like an arrow that has not yet spent its force; it may yet strike us.

127, 128. A man may be excused for stealing (himself) away if that is his only hope of safety.

### Act II.—Scene 4.

*Time*—Later in the same morning.

4. Has made my previous experiences seem trifling.
6. The world is compared to the stage of a theatre: compare i. 3. 128.
7. **the travelling lamp, the sun.**
8. Has night conquered day (as evil has just conquered goodness), or is the day ashamed to show itself?
12. **towering and place**, though used in a natural sense here, are technical terms in falconry, and there is a reference to their technical meaning.  
towering, the rising of a hawk in the air until it is ready to swoop down on its prey.  
place, the position it occupies just before swooping down.
13. **hawk'd at**, pounced upon, as an owl pounces upon a mouse.
15. **minions**, favourites: in i. 2. 19 Macbeth is called "Valour's minion".
17. **as, as if.**
24. **pretend, intend, purpose**: what did they expect to gain by it? See note on ii. 3. 113.

24. **suborn'd, bribed, secretly prompted.** (Lat. *sub*, under, secretly; *ornare*, to adorn, hence to furnish with things or ideas.)

28, 29. How wasteful was the ambition of these princes, for in their haste they have destroyed the very means of satisfying that ambition—they have caused their father to be murdered, and now have to flee the country.

ravin up, devour greedily.

31. **Scone**, near Perth. The Kings of Scotland were crowned there from very early times, on a stone which was brought to England by Edward I., and which now forms part of the coronation chair of the sovereigns of England in Westminster Abbey.

33. **Colmekill**: the word means 'the cell of Columba' (an Irish missionary who died about 597 A.D.). The island is now called Icolmkill or Iona. It was regarded as a sacred island, and was the burying-place of many kings. It lies off the west coast of Scotland, near to Mull.

40. **benison, blessing.** (From the Lat. *benedictionem*, through the Old Fr. *beneison*.)

### Act III.—Scene 1.

*Time*—A few weeks later: morning.

The murder of Banquo is the subject of the Third Act. Up to this time Macbeth has succeeded in all his attempts; he has removed Duncan; he has secured the crown; he has driven the rightful heir into exile. To make his hold on the throne more sure he now strikes at Banquo and his son. Here comes the first check to his career, for although Banquo falls, Fleance escapes. By this crime, and its failure, his self-control is shaken, and when he thinks that he sees the ghost of Banquo sitting at the banquet he betrays himself in public. The fourth scene of this act is the turning-point of the play.

4. **should not stand in thy posterity**, the kingship would not remain with Macbeth's heirs, but

would eventually pass to those of Banquo.

7. **their speeches shine**, a condensed expression meaning that not only had the words of the witches been fulfilled, but that in their fulfilment they had brought (apparent) prosperity to Macbeth.

8. **verities, true prophecies.**

10. **Sennet**, a particular set of notes played on a trumpet.

11. **our chief guest**, Banquo.

13. **all thing**, used as an adverb meaning *altogether*: the word nothing has been used in a similar way, "Nothing afeared of . . . strange images of death" (i. 3. 96), meaning "not at all afraid".

16. **Command upon me**, a mixture of two constructions—"command

me", and "lay your commands upon me".

16. which, there is no expressed antecedent to this relative: it is supplied by the idea contained in 'command'.

Although Banquo declares his loyalty to Macbeth, we need not suppose either that he approves of what Macbeth has done, or that he is saying what he does not mean. He respects the great office that Macbeth holds, and is simply carrying out the apostle's advice—"Fear God. Honour the King".

22. still, always.

grave and prosperous: Banquo's counsel had been well weighed before being given, and when followed had led to happy results.

28. go not my horse the better: notice that *go* is subjunctive. I shall have to borrow an hour or two from the night if my horse does not go at a better rate, so as to make that unnecessary.

28. twain, an old form of the word *two*, frequently used in Shakespeare and the Bible.

30. our bloody cousins, Malcolm and Donalbain, the sons of Duncan, falsely accused of procuring the murder of their father.

bestow'd, settled.

32. parricide here means 'the act of murdering one's father'; it can also mean the person who commits such a murder. (Lat. *pater*, a father, and *cædo*, to kill.)

33. strange invention. evil stories about Macbeth invented by them (as he puts it).

34. therewithal, with that, in addition to that: that=the intrigues of Malcolm and Donalbain.

35. Craving us jointly, requiring our joint attention.

Hie, hasten. (A.S. *higian*, to hasten.)

37. our time does call upon 's, time presses us.

44. while then, till then.

45. Sirrah, sir, used in a contemptuous sense. (Has the same origin as *sir*: Fr. *sire*; Lat. *senior*: but the form *sirrah* comes to us through the Icel. *sira*.)

48. To be thus: it is nothing to be king, unless I can be safe in that position.

49-64. These lines show that Macbeth had a double fear of Banquo: he feared him because of the unswerving uprightness of his character, which, being coupled with a high degree of wisdom in deciding what action to take (see line 22 in this scene) and of bravery in carrying it out, made him dangerous to evil-doers; and he feared him because of the prophecy of the witches (I. 3. 67) that Banquo's descendants should sit on the throne.

49. in Banquo, with regard to Banquo.

56. My Genius, guardian spirit: it was an old idea that everyone was watched over by some invisible spirit.

57. Mark Antony's: in Plutarch's life of Antony, which Shakespeare had read, it is said that the angel which watched over Antony quailed when it came near the angel which watched over Cesar.

This is the origin of the expression in the text; but Shakespeare probably meant simply that Macbeth felt himself rebuked and cowed by the nobility and uprightness of Banquo's character.

61, 62. fruitless, barren, a crown and sceptre that should not pass to his descendants.

63. with an unlineal hand, by the hand of one not belonging to my line.

65. filed, defiled.

68. mine eternal jewel, my immortal soul. Notice that *mine* was formerly used instead of *my* when the following word began with a vowel, but is now used as a pronoun, while *my* is adjectival.

72. champion me, 'fight against me', not 'for me' as the word regularly means.

to the utterance: from the French *à l'outrance*; a combat *à l'outrance* was one in which the combatants fought with sharp weapons, and only ended with the death or yielding of one of them.

77-79. The murderers are not professional assassins; they are soldiers who believed that Macbeth had

- wronged them in some way, perhaps kept them from being promoted in the army. He has persuaded them that Banquo was the real author of their troubles.
80. pass'd in probation with you, spent the time (of our first interview) in proving to you.
81. borne in hand, buoyed up with false hopes.
88. gospel'd, filled with the spirit of forgiveness taught in the gospel.
92. In a list of human beings you would no doubt be reckoned among the men, just as every poor cur is called a dog.
94. Shoughs, shock-haired dogs, dogs with shaggy hair.  
water-rugs, rough water-dogs.  
demi-wolves, a cross between a wolf and a dog.  
clept, called. (A.S. *cleopian*, to call.)
95. the valued file, the list which distinguishes them according to their value.
97. housekeeper, the dog that guards the house.
99. closed, enclosed.
100. Particular addition: in the list which takes note of the value of the dogs he receives some suitable title, and is not merely written down as a dog, as in the general catalogue.
102. file, the list.
- 107, 108. While Banquo lives we (Macbeth) cannot enjoy good health; if he were dead all would be well.
112. tugg'd, pulled about, buffeted.
112. with, by, as in line 68 of this scene.
114. on't, of it.
116. distance, alienation, enmity.
118. my near'st of life, the nearest parts to those where my life is, my most vital parts.
- The idea running through lines 116-118 is that of two duellists fighting with swords; hence come the words 'distance', 'thrusts', 'nearest of life'.
120. bid my will avouch it, make my mere will the justification of the act.
121. for, because of.
122. but wail, but I must bewail.
123. Who I myself struck down. As *who* is the object of the verb 'struck' it should be *whom*; but in Elizabethan times there was less regard for strict conformity to the rules of grammar than is required to-day.
130. the perfect spy o' the time, inform you of the exact time when you should act.
132. something from, somewhat away from: *something* is an adverb: compare the use of *nothing* in v. 2. 20 and v. 4. 2, and see note on line 13 of this scene.
- 132, 133. always thought That I require a clearness: it being always kept in mind that I must be clear from suspicion.
134. rubs, properly something preventing the free running of a ball in the game of bowls; hence hindrances, imperfections.
138. Resolve yourselves apart, go away and make up your minds.

## Act III.—Scene 2.

- Time*—Directly after Scene 1.
8. attend, await.
5. our desire, the crown, in this case.
- This hopeless little speech gives us a moment's glimpse into the real feelings of Lady Macbeth, her deep dissatisfaction with the results of the crime in which she had taken part. But she hides it instantly on her husband's entrance, and is as ready as ever to urge him on in the path they have chosen.

10. Using, keeping constantly before you, cherishing.
12. Should be without regard, should be disregarded, not constantly pondered over.
13. scotch'd: to 'scotch' is properly to make slight cuts in a thing; hence, to injure without destroying.
14. She 'll close, the cuts will heal up.
16. the frame of things, the uni-

- verse as held together by an orderly power.
16. both the worlds, heaven and earth.
20. our place, the throne.
21. Comparing the torture which the mind suffers in remembering evil deeds to the torture of the body on a rack.
22. ecstasy, any unnaturally excited state of mind.
23. Notice the repetition of the letter *j* in 'life's fitful fever'; this device is called *alliteration*.
25. Duncan had suffered from 'domestic malice' in the rebellion which Macbeth had put down (Act i. Scene 2) and from 'foreign levy' in the army of Sweno which supported that rebellion.
27. Gentle my lord, for 'my gentle lord', is not an uncommon order of words in Shakespeare: 'good my lord' occurs frequently.
29. So shall I, so will I.
31. Present him eminence, show special attention to him.
33. flattering streams, streams of flattery which we have to pour upon Banquo and other courtiers.
34. vizards, masks; properly the front part of a helmet, which hid a good deal of the face.
38. Nature has given them no perpetual hold on life. Copy is used for *copyhold*, a form of agreement by which one person holds land from another for a limited time. Banquo and Fleance are spoken of as holding their lives from Nature under an agreement which is limited, and so Lady Macbeth hints they might be put to death. This passage is one of many in which Shakespeare shows a familiarity with legal terms and ideas which has led some to think that he was for a time, when a lad, employed in a lawyer's office.

Another and more simple explanation of the passage is that

'nature's copy' means the human form. Lady Macbeth would then mean 'They are only human beings, and therefore will not live for ever'.

41. cloister'd flight: cloisters are covered walks round the courts of monasteries or colleges, and are favourite haunts of the bat.

Hecate, here simply the goddess of night; not thought of in the same way as in ii. 1. 52.

42. shard-borne beetle: the hard and shiny wing-cases of the beetle are called *shards*, because they somewhat resemble fragments of pottery which are also called *shards* or *sheards*, as in *King Solomon's Mines*.

43. yawning peal: peal which invites to sleep. The hum of the beetle is compared to the ringing of bells at evening.

45. chuck, chicken, a term of endearment, a relic of the days when Macbeth's love for his wife was something real and had not been eaten up by selfish ambition; it stands in painful contrast to the horrible deed he was contemplating.

46. seeling, in falconry, was the sewing together of the eyelids of a hawk to make it tractable: hence night is spoken of as blinding the eye of day.

47. Scarf up, cover up, blindfold.

49. that great bond, the destiny foretold for Banquo's descendants.

51. rooky, where the rooks live; or it may be quite a different word, meaning *misty*, from an Old English word *roky*, connected with the Scotch *reek*, to smoke. (Lang may your lum reek = Long may your chimney smoke.)

53. preys, each to his own prey: the plural is unusual: compare *loves* in the last scene, line 122.

55. One evil deed has to be backed up by others.

### Act III.—Scene 3.

*Time*—Later in the same day as Scene 2.

Macbeth is so anxious that no hitch shall occur in his plot that he sends a third murderer to assist the other

two, or to keep watch upon them. It has been suggested, with some probability, that the third murderer is Macbeth himself in disguise.

2, 3. We need not mistrust this third

- man, since he repeats our instructions just as Macbeth directed us.  
 6. late, belated.  
 7. to gain the inn betimes.  
 10. within the note of expectation, on the list of guests expected at Macbeth's banquet.  
 11. go about, go by a roundabout way.  
 12-14. These lines are put in to avoid

the necessity of bringing horses on to the stage. It must be remembered that in Shakespeare's time no scenery was used in the theatres, and when a tragedy, such as *Macbeth*, was being acted the stage was hung with black. The appearance of a horse in such surroundings would have excited laughter rather than have helped to make the scene real.

### Act III.—Scene 4.

- Time*—Evening of the same day.  
 1. degrees, rank, which decided the order in which the guests would sit.  
 1, 2. at first And last, once for all.  
 3-6. Lady Macbeth sits in her chair of state while her husband moves about among the guests.  
 6. require her welcome, ask her to welcome us to her side.  
 11. large, free, unrestrained.  
 12. Banquo's murderer stands at the entrance to the banquet-hall, which would be covered by a curtain, so that Macbeth could speak to him without attracting the notice of those within.  
 14. The blood is better outside you than inside him: the grammatical mistake of putting *he* for *him* is probably due to the fact that the preposition follows the word it governs instead of coming before it.  
 19. nonpareil, one who has no equal.  
 21. my fit, the agony of terror to which he is subject when he remembers the prophecy of the witches.  
 23. the casing air, the air that surrounds and encloses everything.  
 25. Made a fellow-prisoner with doubts and fears that give me no rest: saucy=pungent, biting.  
 32. We'll talk to each other again.  
 33. give the cheer, lead the festive merriment.  
 33-35. If you do not repeatedly bid your guests welcome you make them as uncomfortable as if they were expected to pay for their dinner.  
 34. a-making, the 'a' is a preposition, contracted from the A.S. *an* or *on*, which often corresponds to the modern *in*.

36. From thence, when away from home.  
 40. We should have had all that is honourable in the country under one roof.  
 42. Who, as the object of the verb challenge, should be whom.  
 42, 43. 'I trust that Banquo's absence is due to his own act (even though I must regard that as unkind) rather than to any mischance which may have befallen him.' A hypocritical speech which is fitly rewarded by the horror which falls upon Macbeth when he thinks that he sees Banquo's ghost.  
 46. The chair which appears empty to everyone else seems to Macbeth to be occupied by Banquo's ghost: but on first looking round for a seat in response to Ross's invitation he only notices that there is no vacant place, and it is not till line 49 that he recognizes the form of the man he has murdered. This gradual recognition of the ghost is a masterly touch.  
 56. upon a thought, as quick as thought, in a moment.  
 57. extend his passion, prolong his seizure.  
 58. Having quieted the guests and made them resume the feast Lady Macbeth, speaking in low tones and aside, strains every nerve to bring her husband back to his ordinary mind.  
 60. O proper stuff! What downright nonsense!  
 63. flaws, properly gusts of wind, hence outbursts of excited fancy.  
 64. to, compared to.  
 66. Authorized by, vouched for by.  
 68. Macbeth was gazing at the chair in which he saw the ghost of

- Banquo, but which appeared empty to all the rest.
69. When Macbeth thought he saw the dagger on the night when he murdered Duncan he was able, by an effort of will, to banish the illusion from his mind (ii. 1. 47). His imagination is now less under control; although there is more need for self-command he cannot pull himself together.
71. charnel-houses, houses for holding dead bodies. (From same root as *carnal*, Lat. *caro*, *carnis*, flesh.)
- 71-73. We may as well leave dead bodies to be eaten by the birds if they are going to come out again from the places where we have buried them.
76. Before the laws of men cleansed the commonwealth from violence and made it gentle.
- Notice the way in which the adjective *gentle* is used, describing the condition of the 'weal', after it had been purged. This use is called *proleptic*, i.e. taking before-hand.
- weal, the state, the commonwealth.
81. twenty mortal murders on their crowns, twenty deadly wounds on their heads, a reminiscence of the 'twenty trenched gashes' on the head of Banquo, mentioned in lines 27, 28 of this scene.
85. muse, wonder.
90. Notice again how the hypocritical expression of the desire for Banquo's presence is immediately fulfilled, to Macbeth's confusion, by the appearance of his ghost. The actual entry would take place with the mention of his name, but the stage-direction was usually put a little earlier as a warning to the actor to be ready. So also in line 41.
- 91, 92. We long to drink the health of Banquo and of you all, and to wish all good wishes to you all.
93. Avaunt, begone. (Fr. *en avant*, forward!)
95. speculation, look of intelligence.
101. arm'd, cased in armour, i.e. its thick hide.
- Hyrcan: Hyrcania was the name of an undefined district lying south of the Caspian Sea. Vergil (*Aeneid* iv. 367) makes Dido speak of the "Hyrcanian tigresses".
102. but that, the form of Banquo.
105. If trembling I inhibit then: this line has given rise to a great deal of discussion, but it is still uncertain what Shakespeare meant by it. If we accept the words as they stand the best meaning we can give them is, 'if I then dwell in a state of trembling', 'continue trembling'. Of other readings that have been suggested the best is "if, trembling, I inhibit thee", i.e. warn thee off, refuse to fight thee.
106. The baby of a girl, a mere doll.
109. broke, for broken: see note on i. 4. 3.
110. admired, wondered at.
111. overcome, come over, overshadow.
- 112, 113. "I cannot understand my own state of mind when I see you unmoved by this terrible sight."
- owe, possess.
119. Stand not: do not wait to go out in the order of your rank, as would be usual at court.
121. Notice the marked change in Lady Macbeth's manner after the guests have gone. While they were present she has tried to the utmost, even with taunts, to prevent her husband from betraying himself. Now that she is alone with him she utters no word of reproach; she speaks only three short, tired sentences, and the last of these is one of gentle pity for the man who is trying to talk himself into courage again.
124. Augurs, in modern spelling, *auguries*; the discovery or foretelling of facts by observations upon birds.
- understood relations, mystical connections between things, understood only by a few.
125. magot-pies, an uncontracted form of magpie. (Magot=Fr. *mar-got*, a familiar form of *Marguerite*, both used to denote a magpie. Pie=Lat. *pica*, a magpie: so that the English form contains the name of the bird twice.)
- choughs, a kind of jackdaw.
126. What is the night? How goes the night?
127. at odds with, contending with.

128. How say'st thou that? What do you think of the fact that: The next line shows that Macbeth is not asking his wife whether Macduff has refused to come, as the words might seem to mean at first sight.

136-138. Macbeth compares his course of action since he came to the throne to a man wading the ford of a river.

138. as go o'er, as going over to the other side.

The infinitive *go* is used to correspond with the gerund *returning*.

140. Which must be carried into action before I have time to ponder over them.

142. self-abuse, self-delusion: Macbeth now thinks that the ghost was conjured up by his own imagination.

143. The fear which possesses the man who is not used to crime, whose conscience is not hardened by practice.

### Act III.—Scene 5.

*Time*—The night following upon the same day.

There are strong reasons for believing that this scene was not written by Shakespeare, but was inserted by some later writer, probably Middleton.

1. Hecate, another name for Diana, who was sometimes represented as a goddess of the lower world. See note on ii. 1. 52.

angrily, angrily.

2. beldams, properly means 'fine

ladies (Fr. *belle dame*), but was used in a contemptuous way.

7. close, secret.

15. Acheron, the name of a river in Greece, supposed to lead to the lower world; but the name came to be applied to the lower world itself.

24. profound, having deep and mysterious qualities.

26. sleights, arts.

32. security, a false feeling of security, carelessness.

### Act III.—Scene 6.

The time of this scene is not in agreement with the course of the play. After the banquet (Act iii. Scene 4) Macbeth says that Macduff has refused to come to court when bidden, but knows nothing of his flight to England. The next morning Macbeth visits the witches (Act iv. Scene 1), and it is only after his interview with them that messengers arrive with the news of Macduff's flight. This scene then, coming as it does between those mentioned above, should take place early on the morning after the banquet. Yet it is said (lines 37-39) that the report of what Macduff has gone to do in England has roused Macbeth to prepare for war. An interval of some few days at least must be allowed for this.

Notice the ironical tone which Lennox adopts: he means much more than he says.

1. have but hit your thoughts, have just suggested that my ideas agree with yours.

4. marry, a corruption of 'by Mary', i.e. the Virgin Mary. An old form of swearing which, by Shakespeare's time, had become an almost unmeaning expression.

8. Who cannot want the thought: double negatives, in which the two negative forms are used to intensify, not to counteract, one another, are not uncommon in Shakespeare. In i. 4. 30, Duncan says:

Noble Banquo,

That hast no less deserved, nor  
must be known

No less to have done so;

In a similar way the words *cannot* and *want* form a kind of double negative, for *want*=*not to have*. The meaning in modern English is expressed by leaving out one of the negatives—'Who can want the thought?' i.e. 'Who can fail to think?'

21. from broad words, because of his plain-spoken remarks (about the murders of Duncan and Banquo).

21. 22. fail'd His presence, failed to be present.
25. the due of birth, the crown, which was Malcolm's 'due' because he was the eldest son of Duncan.
27. the most pious Edward, Edward the Confessor.
29. his high respect, the high respect in which he is held.
30. upon his aid, for the purpose of his aid.
31. Siward, Earl of Northumbria: he had distinguished himself in Edward's service by suppressing Godwin's rebellion. Duncan had married Siward's daughter.
35. The order of words is curious: it has been proposed to read: 'Our feasts and banqueta free from bloody knives'.

36. free honours, distinctions freely and honourably bestowed.
38. exasperate: a form of the past participle taken direct from the perfect participle passive of the Latin verb, without the addition of *ed*. It is of course only permissible in poetry.
40. absolute, decisive.
- The 'Sir, not I', is, of course, Macduff's answer to the messenger, though the words read as if the messenger said them.
41. cloudy, frowning.
- me, the 'ethic dative' of the person interested in the action.
- 48, 49. The natural order is, 'our country suffering under a hand accursed'.

### Act IV.—Scene I.

**Time**—The morning after the banquet (Act iii. Scene 4).

The Fourth Act is the shadow of the coming retribution. Macbeth goes to consult the witches; the words he hears in their cavern are only meant to lure him to his doom. The cruel and useless murder of Macduff's wife and children makes this doom more certain; and at the end of the Act we hear of the preparations which will bring retribution upon him.

There is a curious parallel, which, so far as I am aware, has not been noticed before, between Macbeth's visit to the witches and Saul's visit to the witch of Endor (1 Sam. xxviii. 7-25). Both kings were in a desperate state of mind, resulting from their own evil deeds. Both hear their doom from apparitions raised by the witches. Both leave the place no happier than they came to it. Both are killed in battle soon after, and succeeded by a king of another line. The similarity is the more noteworthy since Holinshed furnishes no more material for this scene than the sentence, "And suerlie herevpon had he put Makduffe to death, but that a certeine witch, whome hee had in great trust, had told that he shold never be slaine with man borne of anie woman, nor vanquished till the wood of Bernane came to the castell of Dunsinane". The details of the

scene, then, are certainly not drawn from Holinshed, but appear to have been invented by Shakespeare; and it seems not unlikely that this story of Saul and the witch of Endor may have been in his mind when writing it.

1. brinded, the same word as *brindled*; streaked.
2. hedge-pig, hedge-hog.
3. Harpier, meant to be the name of a spirit: perhaps a corruption of *Harpy*.
8. Swelter'd venom, poison that has come out from the toad like sweat. 'Swelter' is generally used of the effect of heat.
12. Fillet, a strip cut off.
- The repetition of the *f* in *fillet* and *fenny*, and of the *b* in *boil* and *bake* (line 14), is another instance of alliteration. See note on iii. 2. 23.
14. newt, a small lizard. The word is properly *ewt* or *eit*; the *n* has become attached to it through speaking of an *ewt*.
16. fork, forked tongue.
- blind-worm, the slow-worm: it has no sting, but its long tongue is often ignorantly mistaken for one.
17. howlet, owllet, a little owl.
23. Powdered mummy was often used as a medicine in the Middle Ages.

23. maw and gulf, stomach and gullet (throat).
24. ravin'd, ravenous; or it may mean gorged with eating.
28. Sliver'd, sliced off. (Connected with *slit* and *slice*.)
30. chaudron, entrails.
34. baboon's : the verse requires the accent to be on the first syllable.
- 36-43. The lines enclosed in brackets were probably not in the play as Shakespeare wrote it.
40. The song is found in full in Middleton's play of *The Witch*, a fact which helps to prove that Shakespeare's play has been meddled with by that writer.
47. conjure, accented on the first syllable: it is used in the sense of 'adjure', 'cause to swear'. In modern English *conjure* is used in this sense.
50. yeasty, foaming like yeast.
51. navigation, used for ships.
52. bladed corn, corn in the blade, before it has grown to be corn in the ear.
- lodged, laid low.
56. germens, fruitful seeds: but the words are used with a symbolic sense; the meaning is, 'though the processes of nature are thrown into utter confusion'.
57. sicken, has grown disgusted with its own work.
62. Her nine farrow, nine young pigs. It is curious to notice the connection between this word and the word *pork*; thus: *farrow* comes from A.S. *fearn*, a pig: the Middle High German word is *varch*: German, *ferkel*; Lat. *porcus*, from which comes *pork*.
62. sweaten, an irregular form of the past participle.
65. deftly, cleverly.
- By the armed head is meant Macbeth's head, which was cut off by Macduff; the bloody child represents Macduff; and the child crowned, Malcolm.
71. Hast truly expressed my fear.
73. more potent, a hint that Macduff would in the end prevail over Macbeth.
79. What fear need I have of thee?
81. Macbeth thought that the promise which had just been given to him made him safe from Macduff, as from every other man. Yet he would make certain that Fate would fulfil this promise by slaying Macduff.
85. the round, a crown.
90. Birnam wood. Birnam Hill, from which the wood has now disappeared, is near Dunkeld.
- Dunsinane hill, can be seen from Birnam Hill, about twelve miles away. Dunsinane is about seven miles from Perth.
92. impress, press into his service. (Compare the word *press-gang*).
93. bodelements, prophecies.
96. Live as long as nature permits him (i.e. not die a violent death).
97. mortal custom, the end which comes to every man—death.
108. Eight kings of Scotland are said to have descended from Banquo, the last being James VI., who in 1603 became James I. of England.
114. till the crack of doom, till the thunders of the judgment-day are heard.
118. The two-fold balls refer to the double coronation of James, first at Scone as James VI. of Scotland, then at Westminster as James I. of England.
- The treble sceptres represent the three kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland.
120. blood-bolter'd : with his hair clotted or matted with blood. The word *boltered* is still used in the Warwickshire dialect in this sense.
- 122-129. This speech was probably put into the play by Middleton. Hecate retired at line 40, and nothing has been said about her reappearance.
124. sprites, spirits.
131. aye, for ever.
141. anticipatest, preventest. Notice that in Shakespeare's time *prevent* was used in the sense of *go before*, *anticipate*, as in the Prayer Book, "Prevent us, O Lord, in all our doings", and Psalm cxix.
- 147, "I prevented the dawning of the morning".
142. flighty, fleeting.  
o'ertook, for *o'retaken*. See note on l. 4. 8.
150. trace him in his line, follow him in his lineage.

## Act IV.—Scene 2.

- Time*—Another day, soon after Scene 1.
7. **titles**, all to which he has a title or claim.
9. **the natural touch**, the care for one's kindred which is implanted in us by nature.
- 9-11. The natural history is at fault. The owl does not take young birds out of their nests, nor is it likely that the wren would fight against an owl.
11. **Her young ones** (being) in her nest, a nominative absolute.
14. Ross was related to Lady Macduff.
17. **The fits o' the season**, the changing circumstances of the time.
- 18, 19. When we are counted traitors though we do not know ourselves to be such.
- 19, 20. When we believe rumours because they accord with our fears.
22. **Each way and move**: it is best to take *move* as a verb, meaning

- 'toss about'. But it has been suggested to read 'each way and none', meaning that although we are driven in every direction we made no headway.
25. Speaking to Macduff's little boy.
- 28-30. If I were to stay I should shame myself by weeping.
34. lime, bird-lime.
35. gin, a trap or snare. (Shortened from Middle Eng. *engin*, a contrivance: Lat. *ingenium*, natural capacity, also an invention.)
36. They (the traps) are not set for poor birds in our everyday life.
47. **swears and lies**, takes an oath and does not carry it out.
56. enow, enough.
65. Though I am perfectly acquainted with your honourable name and character.
66. doubt, fear.
- 69, 70. It is cruel to frighten you thus: it would be worse to leave you unwarned of your danger.

## Act IV.—Scene 3.

*Time*—A few weeks later.

Malcolm has now been some time in England, and Edward the Confessor is pledged to help him in driving Macbeth from the throne. Macbeth has several times attempted to get him into his power, but without success (lines 108-108). Now Macduff has joined him, but Malcolm has grown suspicious, and is afraid that he may be only another secret emissary from Macbeth sent to entrap him. He therefore describes himself in very black colours to see whether Macduff's patriotism is genuine, or whether he can find evidence of any plot.

3. mortal, deadly, as in i. 5. 89.
4. **Bestride**, stand over in an attitude of defence.
- birthdom, mother country.
6. that, so that.
8. Similar expressions of grief.
10. As suitable opportunities present themselves.
11. spoke, see note on i. 4. 8.

12. sole name, mere name.
- 14, 15. You might earn his gratitude by betraying me to him.
15. and wisdom, and it is wisdom.
- 19, 20. Even a good man may fall away from virtue when a king's commands are laid upon him.
21. If you are honourable my mere thoughts cannot make you otherwise.
- 23, 24. Goodness must always look like goodness, even though evil tries to imitate it in appearance.
24. Macduff despairs because he is not trusted by Malcolm.
26. rawness, haste. Tennyson speaks of "Raw haste, half sister to delay".
- Macduff's real reason was that he put his duty to his country before his private interests; if he had waited to bring his family with him he might never have been able to reach England at all.
- 29, 30. If I seem to be suspicious, do not count it as dishonour to your-

- self, but merely as a necessary way of securing my own safety. Other arrivals from Scotland had made Malcolm suspicious. See lines 106-108 of this scene.
34. *afeer'd* (quite a different word from *afear'd*): a law term, meaning 'confirmed'.
- The sense is, 'Poor country, you must endure your wrongs; their legal title to plague you has been confirmed by the very man who should have removed them'.
38. I am suspicious, but no more than that: I have certainly not made up my mind that you are a traitor.
39. I think, I ponder on the fact that.
48. *more sundry ways*, in more various ways.
55. *confineless*, boundless.
57. top, overtop, outdo.
66. ill-composed affection, disposition made up of evil elements.
67. *staunchless*, not to be satisfied.
69. his, one man's.
76. *The sword of our slain kings*, the sword by which they have been slain.
77. *foisons*, plenty, abundance. (Lat. *fusionem*, a pouring out; *fundere*, to pour.)
78. *Of your mere own*, your own absolute property.
- portable, endurable.
79. If balanced by some virtues.
81. *verity*, truthfulness.
82. *perseverance*, accented on the second syllable. *Perséver* is always accented in the same way in Shakespeare.
84. *no relish of them*, no natural taste for them.
87. Not to make hell better, but to get rid of concord from earth.
88. *Uproar*, set in uproar; not known elsewhere as a verb.
97. *blaspheme his breed*, slander his parentage.
100. Died every day she lived, lived in constant preparation for death. Cf. 1 Cor. xv. 31, "I die daily".
104. *Child of integrity*: Macduff's indignant outburst could never have come from a traitor; only a truly sincere man would have spoken words like that.
107. *trains*, devices, snares: Macbeth had sent various messengers to entrap Malcolm into his power.
114. *For*, as.
124. at a point, fully prepared.
- 125, 126. May our prospect of success be as great as is the justice of our cause.
131. *stay his cure*, are waiting to be healed by him.
- 131, 132. convinces The great assay of art, baffles all attempts to cure it by medicine. (Lat. *convincere*, to conquer.) See also i. 7. 64.
134. *presently*, immediately.
135. the evil, scrofula, often called the king's evil. It was believed that anyone who suffered from this disease would be cured if touched by a king or queen. Edward the Confessor was the first sovereign to whom this power was attributed. Later kings, and among them James I., continued the custom of touching people to cure them, and the passage is no doubt introduced as a compliment to this sovereign. It has no proper connection with the play.
141. *mere despair*, complete despair.
142. The practice of hanging a gold coin on the necks of the people who were to be cured by the king's touch was much later than the time of Edward the Confessor.
- stamp, coin. Coins were used for this purpose until the reign of Charles II. From that time a special medal was struck. The one which Queen Anne hung round the neck of Dr. Johnson is to be seen in the British Museum.
143. *spoken*, said.
152. *makes*, see note on ii. 3. 75.
153. Is the condition of Scotland the same?
158. *not mark'd*, so common that they pass unnoticed.
159. *modern*, commonplace, ordinary.
- ecstasy* is used in the sense of any violent emotion.
160. *for who*: the pronoun *who* often remains uninflected in Shakespeare. It must of course be parsed as Objective though not written *whom*.

162. or ere, before.  
relation, description.
163. nice, exact, minute.
164. Anyone who tells of a crime enacted an hour before is biased for bringing stale news.
165. teems, brings forth, with the added idea of abundance.
171. heavily, sadly.
172. were out, were in open rebellion.
173. witness'd, made credible.
174. power, troops.
175. the time of help, the time when your help would be of great value.
177. doff, put off (shortened from *do off*; in the same way *don* is a contraction of *do on*).
180. none, there is none. Compare line 15 of this scene.
181. gives out, proclaims, speaks of.
184. latch, catch. Both words are also used as nouns, for we speak of the 'latch', or the 'catch' of a door.
185. a fee-grief, a grief that has a single owner. *Fee* comes from *fief*, a feudal term for a piece of land held from a superior.
195. quarry, dead bodies, properly of animals killed in hunting. (Lat. *corium*, hide; *quarry*, a stone-pit; it is quite a different word: it comes from Lat. *quadrare*, to square.)
199. Whispers is often used without a preposition in Shakespeare: e.g. 'He came to whisper Wolsey' (Henry VIII. i. 1. 179).  
o'erfraught, overladen.
201. must be from thence, was obliged to be away from the place. *Must* is past tense.
205. He, Malcolm. He cannot understand the depth of my grief since he has no children of his own.
208. fell, cruel, fierce; as in iv. 2. 70.
209. Dispute it, do not tamely accept this state of things, but fight against it.
- 211, 212. such . . . That, in modern English *such* is followed by the relative *as*.
218. Convert, change. In modern English 'convert' is not used intransitively, as it is here.
221. intermission, anything put between, hindrance, delay. (Lat. *inter*, between, *mittere*, to send.)
226. We only need to take leave of the king; or it may mean, we only need his permission to set out.
227. Is ripe for shaking, like fruit on a tree, ready to be shaken from where it hangs.
228. Put on their instruments, are girding on their swords for the conflict.

## Act V.—Scene I.

*Time*—Another day, not long after the last scene. We now come to the retribution. Lady Macbeth has not appeared since the Banqueting Scene (Act III. Sc. 4); she and her husband have drifted apart. The memory of the part she had played in the murder of Duncan is crushing her, and in her sleep, when her strong will is powerless, she lives over again the terrible deeds which have made her queen: but the strain is too great for her physical strength, and it kills her. Macbeth clings till the last moment to the prophecies which really foretell his doom. Whatever strength of mind he had is gone, and he wavers between a hopeless gloominess and a desperate recklessness. When the

- last straw to which he can hold is swept away, he falls by the hand of Macduff.
3. went into the field, led out his forces, took the field.
4. nightgown, see note on ii. 2. 70.
9. effects of watching, the actions of waking hours.
- 10, 11. actual performances, actions as contrasted with words.
39. you mar all: she is now thinking of Macbeth's conduct at the banquet (Act III. Sc. 4).
41. spoke, see note on i. 4. 8.
- 43, 44. all the perfumes, &c.: remember what Lady Macbeth said just after the murder of Duncan, "A little water clears us of this deed" (ii. 2. 67).

48. the dignity of her position as queen.  
 56. on 's, of his.  
 68. the means of all annoyance, everything which she might use to harm herself.

69. still, always.  
 70. mated, bewildered. (The Persian words *shah mdt*, 'the king is dead', used in the game of chess, gave rise to our *check-mate*, the latter half of which is the word used above.)

### Act V.—Scene 2.

*Time*—A few weeks later.

1. power, forces, as in iv. 3. 174.  
 3. dear causes, the causes which affect them each so closely. The murder of Duncan affected Malcolm; the murder of his wife and children affected Macduff.  
 4, 5. Would rouse even a dead man to take part in the bloody strife.  
 4. bleeding is an adjective to 'alarm'.  
     alarm, call to arms: Shakespeare speaks of *bleeding war* (Rich. II. iii. 3. 94), but here the word is less naturally applied to the summons to war.  
 5. mortified, dead.  
     Birnam wood and Dunsinane (line 12) are mentioned in order to prepare the way for the fulfilment of the prophecies of the apparitions (iv. 1. 89–91).  
 7. Donalbain had fled to Ireland after the murder of his father; Malcolm to England (ii. 3. 119, 120).  
 8. file, list: used also in iii. 1. 95.  
 10. unrough, without any hair on their chins.  
 11. Protest, show forth, display.

12. Dunsinane: the accent is here on the first syllable. In iv. 1. 90 it was on the second.  
 13. lesser, a double comparative: an adverb here; an adjective in i. 3. 65.  
 15, 16. As a man afflicted with the dropsy cannot buckle his belt, so Macbeth cannot control the affairs of his country.  
 18. minutely, every minute. It is best to regard it as an adverb to 'upbraid'.  
 20. Nothing, an adverb; 'not at all'. (So also in v. 4. 2.) Compare *somethings*, iii. 1. 132.  
 23. to recoil and start, we should use the gerund, 'for recoiling and starting'. The infinitive was used by Elizabethan writers with more freedom than in modern English.  
 24. all that is within him, all the memories of his treachery and violence.  
 27. the medicine of the sickly weal; the doctor who will cure the commonwealth, now lying sick. Shakespeare uses 'medicine' more than once in the sense of 'physician'.

### Act V.—Scene 3.

*Time*—The same day.

1. let them fly all: Macbeth's supporters have begun to desert him.  
 3. taint, be infected.  
 5. All mortal consequences, all the issues of this mortal life.  
     pronounced, have made this announcement to me.  
 8. epicures, men fond of eating and drinking. Epicurus was a Greek philosopher, who lived about 300 B.C., and taught that pleasure is the great end of life; but his idea

- of pleasure was a much higher one than that of his followers.  
 10. sag, droop. It is used of the curved droop of telegraph wires between the poles on which they are fastened.  
 11. Macbeth's violent language shows how completely his self-control has broken down.  
     loon, slow, clumsy fellow. It is the name of a species of water-bird, and is used in the same uncomplimentary way as *booby*, *goose*, *owl*.

15. **Illy-liver'd**, cowardly.  
patch, a fool, so called because the fools or jesters wore a patched coat, made up of different colours.
20. **push**, attack of the English forces.
21. Will make my seat on the throne secure or will dethrone me once for all.

Another reading is, 'Will cheer me ever or disease me now'.

22. My life which should be in the springtime of its manhood is already showing the decay of autumn.

**sear**, withered. (A.S. *sedr*, dry; *sedrian*, to dry up.)

35. **moe**, an older form of *more*. It occurs several times in the Authorized Version of the Bible as published in 1611 (*e.g.* as *mo*, 2 Sam.

v. 18), but has been altered to *more* in later editions.

36. **skirr**, scour.
37. **your patient**, Lady Macbeth.
43. **oblivious**, causing forgetfulness.
44. There is probably some corruption in the text, but no satisfactory alteration has been suggested.
50. **Come, sir**, to the man who is putting on his armour.
52. **pristine health**, the health she formerly enjoyed.
54. **Pull 't off**: his armour: these useless questions to the doctor and the changeableness of his purpose show how shaken and ill-controlled his mind was.
58. **Bring it after me**; his armour.
59. **bane**, ruin, destruction.

### Act V.—Scene 4.

*Time*—The next day.

2. **chambers will be safe**, private homes will be free from Macbeth's spies and murderers.

**nothing**, an adverb, as in v. 2.

- 6, 7. Prevent those who first see us from correctly reporting our numbers.

11. Whenever they can find the opportunity.

12. **more and less**, great and small.

- 14, 15. Let our judgment on the position of affairs await the result of the battle.
14. **censures**, opinions, judgments. (Lat. *censere*, to give an opinion.)
15. **the true event**, the actual result.
18. What we can count as our own and what we must reckon as gain to Macbeth.
- 19, 20. Men may talk in guesses about what they doubtfully expect to happen, but it is only action that can decide the issue.

### Act V.—Scene 5.

*Time*—The same day.

5. **forced**, reinforced. See v. 3, 1, 49.

6. **dareful**, daringly: this is the only place in which Shakespeare uses the word.

9. **forgot**, see note on i. 4. 3.

10. **my senses would have cool'd**: the meaning is much the same as when we say, 'my blood would have run cold'.

11. **fell of hair**, skin (of the head) with the hair on it. (Lat. *pellis*, skin, hide.)

12. **treatise**, tale, story.

13. **As**, as if.

14. **Direness**, horror: this is the only place where Shakespeare uses this word.

17. The news of his wife's death rouses scarcely any feeling in Macbeth. The memory and misery of their crime is weighing upon husband and wife with such crushing force as to make them quite unable to help one another.

18. **such a word**, as Seyton had just spoken.

- 19–28. The main idea of these lines is the hopeless weariness and empty vanity of life. Do not forget that they are spoken by a man who

- has made life worthless by taking selfishness for his guiding principle.  
 23. **dusty death**: compare the words of the burial service, "Dust to dust".  
**brief candle**, the 'vital spark' of life.  
 24, 25. Another illustration drawn from the stage. See also ii. 4. 6.  
 30. **Gracious my lord**: see note on iii. 2. 27.  
 34. Macbeth's violence is, of course, due to his remembering the prophecy of the apparition in iv. 1. 89-91.  
 37. **this three mile**: we should consider such an expression to be bad

- grammar, but Elizabethan writers used much greater freedom in such matters than is allowed to-day.  
 40. **cling thee, shrivel thee up, sooth, true.**  
 42. **pull in resolution, rein in, check my former confidence.**  
 47. **avouches, declares.**  
 49. **gin, begin.**  
 50. **estate, settled order.**  
 51. **wrack, wreck, general destruction.**  
 52. **harness, armour.** We read of Ahab being smitten "between the joints of the harness" (1 Kings, xxii. 34).

### Act V.—Scene 6.

*Time*—The same day.

1. **leavy, leafy.**  
 2. **show, appear.** See also i. 8. 54.  
**uncle, Siward.** Holinshed makes him Malcolm's grandfather, for Duncan married Siward's daughter. See note on iii. 6. 31.

4. **battle, battalion, division of an army.**  
 5. **upon's, upon us.**  
 7. **If only we should find.**  
 10. **harbingers, heralds, forerunners.** Used also in i. 4. 45.

### Act V.—Scene 7.

*Time*—The same day.

- 1, 2. Macbeth compares himself to a bear tied to a stake and 'baited' by dogs. This was a favourite sport in olden days. Only a certain number of dogs was allowed to attack the bear at a time, and each 'round' was called a 'course'.  
 7. **Than any is, than any that is.**  
 17. **kerns, light-armed soldiers.** Used also in i. 2. 18.  
 18. **staves, spears.**  
 either thou (must fight with me).

20. **undeeded, having done no work in the fight.** Not found elsewhere in Shakespeare.  
 22. **bruited, announced.** (Fr. *bruit*, a noise.)  
 24. **gently render'd, surrendered without resistance.**  
 25. Some of Macbeth's men have come over to our side.  
 27. **itself professes, professes itself, declares itself.**  
 28, 29. **foes That strike beside us,** Scots who had joined Malcolm's side. See line 25, above.

### Act V.—Scene 8.

1. **play the Roman fool**, commit suicide like Cato, Brutus, Antony, and other famous Romans.  
 2. **whiles I see lives, while I can see living men.**  
 4. A mixture of two constructions. 'I have avoided thee most of all men'; 'I have avoided thee more than all other men' (all men else).

- 5, 6. This is the only place where Macbeth shows anything like genuine sorrow for his cruel deeds.  
 8. **Than terms can give thee out, than words can describe thee.**  
 9. **intrenchant, that cannot be cut.**  
 11. **vuinerable crests, helmets that can be wounded, or cut into.**

14. **the angel**, used in a bad sense for 'demon'.
18. **my better part of man**, the nobler part of my manhood, my courage.
20. **pafter**, equivocate, speak deceitfully.
24. **gaze**, something to be stared at: unusual as a noun.
26. **Painted upon a pole**, painted on a cloth hung on a pole outside a travelling show.
29. **baited**, he is still thinking of the bear. See v. 7. 1.
34. **him**: *he* would be grammatically correct: perhaps the phrase 'let him be damned' was in Shakespeare's mind, and gave rise to the 'him'.
36. **go off**, die. *Taking off* was used for 'murder' in i. 7. 20.
40. **but** is not wanted after 'only'.
- 41-43. He had no sooner shown his manly bravery in warfare by not shrinking even from such a foe as Macbeth than he died.
52. **parted**, another word for 'died'. See line 36 above.
54. **stands**, in Holinshed we read that Macbeth's head was stuck on a pole.
55. **the time is free**: now that the tyrant is dead a period of liberty has begun.
56. **pearl**, the flower of thy nobility: used collectively, and so followed by a plural relative in the next line.
61. **reckon with**, repay.
65. Those matters which require to be treated in accordance with the new circumstances in which Scotland finds herself.
68. **Producing forth**, bringing out to justice.
71. **needful else**, other needful things.
75. **Scone**. See note on ii. 4. 31.

## CLASSIFIED INDEX TO THE PRINCIPAL POINTS IN THE NOTES.

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Golgotha, i. 2. 40. (Matt. xxvii. 33.)

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8. Letting 'I dare not' wait upon 'I would', i. 7. 44.
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11. The labour we delight in physics pain, ii. 3. 31.
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The following passages contain special difficulties, and should be studied carefully with the corresponding notes:—

Act i. Sc. 2. 21.	Act iii. Sc. 4. 14.
"    Sc. 5. 20-23.	"    Sc. 4. 105.
"    Sc. 6. 11-14.	"    Sc. 4. 112, 113.
"    Sc. 7. 1-12.	"    Sc. 4. 124.
"    Sc. 7. 21-28.	Act iv. Sc. 2. 21, 22.
"    Sc. 7. 35-38.	"    Sc. 3. 34.
Act ii. Sc. 2. 73.	Act v. Sc. 2. 3-5.
"    Sc. 4. 28, 29.	"    Sc. 4. 14-20.
Act iii. Sc. 2. 38.	"    Sc. 8. 41-43.